

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

# SOCCER



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**WEEKLY**

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GST INCLUSIVE

# Lucky Lindsay lands Dutch deal

*"It's a dream come true"*

**O**lympic Sharks' mid-field maestro, Lindsay Wilson secured a big move to leading Dutch side, PSV Eindhoven last week, saying the transfer was the culmination of a life-long ambition to play European soccer.

Details of the deal were still not available at press time, but ABSW could confirm that the contract was signed late last week in Eindhoven at the club's offices.

However, a top official at Olympic Sharks' Cronulla office, south of Sydney merely revealed that: "He is leaving at the end of the season. He impressed the PSV people and they were confident enough about him to offer a five-

year contract".

Similarly, Sharks CEO, Pater Raskopoulos merely disclosed on the club's website that "negotiations have been ongoing, and are close to being finalised, but as yet the deal had not been completed."

The Australian international, who featured prominently for the Socceroos at the Oceania World Cup qualifying series in Coffs Harbour, last year was with PSV for the past week, and did enough during his trial to earn a five-year contract with Erik Gerets' side.

The 22-year-old Wilson will still remain at the Sharks till the end of the current NSL season, before packing bag and baggage and leaving PSV on July 1.

Wilson said of the ground-breaking deal: "PSV are one of the biggest clubs around and it is a dream come true to be moving to European football."

Wilson, who has often been deployed by both Australia and Olympic Sharks at the right side of midfield, is seen by PSV's coach, Gerets as the long term successor to Danish veteran defender, Jan Heintze.

Similarly, with captain Mark van Bommel and young defender Kevin Hofland continually linked to lucrative moves to the English premiership next season, Gerets is desperate to strengthen the club in the event of their departure.

Van Bommel is believed to have made up his mind to join Arsenal at the end of the season as a replacement for phenomenal Frenchman, Patrick Vieira, while Hofland is top on the list of Manchester United's manager Alex Ferguson. If, as widely expected, Fergusson signs another three-year contract at Old Trafford, his first acquisition is expected to be the versatile Hofland.

All these potential departures have forced Gerets into moving for a durable and promising player such as Wilson who has been one of the bright lights of the NSL over the past two years.

Wilson joins another promising youngster from Olympic Sharks, Nick Carle on the European trail. Carle, a member of Australia's U/21 national squad which competed at the World Youth Championships in Argentina last year concluded a deal to lace boots for French first division side, Troyes just a fortnight back.



Lindsay Wilson (left) contests with Shane Stefanutto of the Brisbane Strikers during a recent NSL match in Sydney.

## KENNETT TALKS TO ABSW!

**I**n a bold move to add his voice to the growing call for changes in Australian soccer, ex Victorian Premier now turning his attentions to FM radio, JEFF KENNETT spoke to our affable Victorian Writer, DANIELA RACO (right).

Kennett casts a critical eye on the state of the game in the country, as well as the performance of the current Ian Knop-led Soccer Australia administration. Coming six months into Knop's era, Kennett's opinion represents a vital scorecard of sorts for Soccer Australia.

Turn to Pages 8 and 9 for this exhaustive chit-chat which also affords you an insight into the private life of this titan of



Daniela Raco

Victorian politics. It is also the first full-length interview Kennett has granted to any media in the country on the issue of soccer in Australia.

*Happy Reading.*

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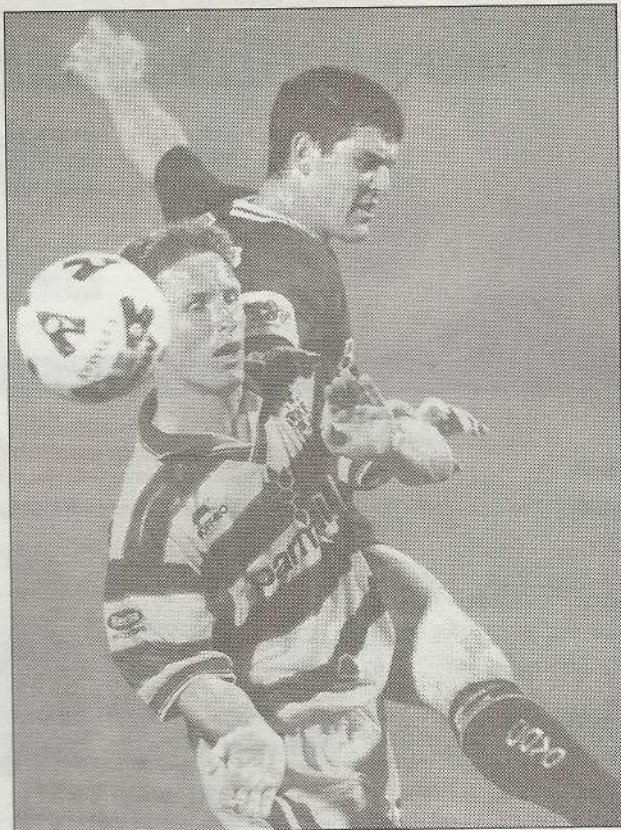
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Joe Spiteri (right) in an aerial battle against a Brisbane Strikers' player while appearing for Olympic last year.

# Spiteri eyes second chance

**E**x-Olympic Sharks Joe Spiteri is hoping to attract the attentions of any interested NSL side as he attempts to stage a second coming to the NSL, just months after walking away from the Sharks.

Spiteri, who has laced boots for Belgian first division side, Lierse as well as Sturm Graz in Austria, revealed last week that he was willing to give it another shot if he could secure a deal with any NSL club.

The striker's new stance is in sharp contrast with his initial posture late last year when he slammed the NSL as low in quality and standard. He was quoted as saying then, "It's a long way to go between the standard we have now in Australia and a fully-professional European league. The clubs are telling me its getting worse and not qualifying for the World Cup hasn't helped".

The 28-year-old striker, who once played along-

side Leeds' star Mark Viduka at Melbourne Knights, spent just a month at Sharks after accepting a short stint offer from coach Gary Phillips. He however found it tough to sparkle into life, while Sharks themselves performed poorly during his time, forcing both parties to call the deal off after four weeks.

Spiteri left then with a promise of taking a one-month holiday, before hitting the European trail in search of the proverbial golden fleece. It was obviously a mild surprise with his recent utterances opting to give the NSL one more chance.

Belgium was believed to be his destination late last year and he helped fuel the speculations by stating that he wouldn't mind an offer from there. In his words then: "There's a few options in Belgium and on the continent so I'll probably head over there in the New Year".

# Schwarzer returns

By Emma Nwaneri

**A**ustralia's number one shot-stopper, Mark Schwarzer is in line for a barnstorming return to Middlesbrough after a two-month period on the sidelines.

The 28 year-old tall goalie is set to return to the starting line-up after completing a successful friendly match last week against Newcastle United's second string side. Schwarzer emerged with his reputation intact as Boro's second side thrashed their opponents 4-0.

The Aussie was impressive throughout the game and even saved a couple of one-on-one situations that would have

embarrassed a less-experienced keeper.

With Boro now set for a photo-finish, end of season fight to avoid the drop, Coach Steve McClaren will be expected to draw on all his reserves in order to keep the club in the premiership.

Expectedly, Schwarzer's return will serve as some good news to McClaren, who has had to endure a spate of injuries to his key players in the past one month. In Schwarzer's absence, second choice goalie, Mark Crossley had deputised admirably and may even give the big some stiff competition for the starting shirt.

Schwarzer had to undergo a minor operation in December, which he picked up during Australia's ill-fated World Cup qualifying campaign against Uruguay.

Despite Schwarzer's heroics, the Aussies failed to overcome a fire-spitting Uruguayan attack that scored thrice in Montevideo to end Australia's hopes in the 2002 World Cup finals.

Since then, Schwarzer has had to endure a lengthy time away from first team action as he recovered from the operation.

In the meantime, Middlesbrough knocked out mighty Manchester United from the FA Cup and if all things go to plan, the big Aussie will likely make his long-awaited return to the team in the 5th round showdown against Blackburn Rovers at the Riverside Stadium, next week.



Mark Schwarzer

# PETKOVIC, BACAK MAKE HISTORY

**T**wo-time NSL Goalkeeper-of-the-Year Awardee, Michael Petkovic, who has also won back-to-back titles with South Melbourne played his 150th NSL game last week in the crucial derby against Melbourne Knights at the Knights Stadium.

The astute and talented goalkeeper has trialled with clubs in France and Norway, and represented the Socceroos at the World Cup Qualifiers in Coffs Harbour last year.

Also, South Melbourne's attacking midfielder, Joe Bacak, who once laced boots for Melbourne Knights made a memorable return to the venue that held several sweet memories for him.

The 28 year-old began his career at the Knights, where he spent three seasons before he left for Sydney. Bacak returned to the Sommers Street half way through the 1994/1995 season, helping the Knights to their first NSL Championship in a glorious campaign.



Michael Petkovic

# DEZ MARTON LIFTS FUTSAL TITLE

**T**he Futsal Five-a-side Indoor Australian National Championship's were recently played over the Australia Day Long Weekend at Castle Hill, with teams travelling from all over to compete.

The Dez Marton's St George Academy came away from the under-10's competition undefeated champions.

The boys played absolutely magnificent over the 2 days and thoroughly deserved the title, as most of this team pictured also were crowned U10' Indoor NSW State Champions held late 2001 at Windsor.

The players can be seen in action playing in the U11's Premier League Outdoor Competition 2002 representing the St George Association.

# U17 Joeys' Tour Cancelled

By Mark Stavroulakis

The future U17 Joeys side has suffered a major blow as their proposed tour to Paraguay has been called off.

Scheduled to have left in April for two and half weeks, the tour organizers in Paraguay pulled out due to

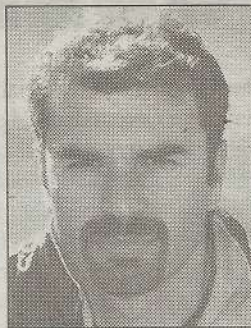
financial difficulties.

Head coach Ange Postecoglou was obviously upset with this event, as it would have provided a better preparation for the new squad.

"It would have been a great tournament had it gone ahead as we would have played against some quality opposition from all over the

world. It was out of our control in the end, and due to the financial instability in Paraguay the organizers decided to call it off. However, it's possible the tournament could happen come end of the year, giving the country time in solving its problems," said Postecoglou.

The future crop of stars now find themselves without



Ange Postecoglou

a good tournament to participate in, and at this stage, other ideas have been put in place as substitute to this unfortunate incident. "At the moment its too early to tell on what to do but no doubt we will be doing all we can in preparing the squad for the qualifiers," said Ange.

The recent Joeys side participated in the Pacific Cup held at Parklea in late

January, and took out the tournament by defeating Vanuatu 4-0.

Postecoglou is still trying out new things with the squad, and apart from the players involved in the Pacific Cup, more will be introduced in up and coming camps.

"I am quite happy with the squad and was obviously

content with the results during the Pacific Cup. I still have a few other players to look at, and I'll look to introducing them in the following camp," said the former South Melbourne coach.

The U17 World Cup will be held in chilly Finland next June/July, which still gives the young squad time to prepare.



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## UN BACKS YOUTH SOCCER

By Graham Cooke

The United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, has joined forces with soccer in the interests of kids everywhere, and with the blessing of the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

The executive director of UNICEF Australia, Gaye Phillips, said the coming World Cup in Japan and Korea would be a focal point for the alliance, with youngsters leading the players on to the field at every game wearing T-shirts emblazoned with 'Say Yes for Children'.

In addition, UNICEF and FIFA will be jointly promoting 'days of tranquility' when fighting stops in trouble spots around the world so that everyone can watch the football.

Annan said the alliance was "a wonderful way of bringing people together and mobilising them to support causes far bigger than themselves."

Phillips said FIFA would not be donating any financial proceeds from the World Cup to UNICEF. "But it is hoped that by bringing young people together and reaching them in this way it will ultimately benefit children by making the world a better place," she said.

"Soccer, as an international sport with millions of fans, can put the message out there that children everywhere need our protection and support."

"Their right to play and have fun is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and we hope Australian fans of the game will support the campaign both now and when the World Cup gets underway."



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# WRIGHT IS NEW QUEENSLAND COACH

By Glenn Davis

**F**ormer national league stalwart Danny Wright has been appointed Queensland coach for the upcoming winter season.

Wright, who stood down from coaching Brisbane City this season,

takes over from last year's coach Miron Bleiberg, who is back at the helm of Brisbane Lions.

Rod Brown, another former veteran national league striker, will be his assistant.

Both Wright and Brown were members of the Brisbane Strikers' grand final winning side five years ago. "I'm

delighted to get the job especially having played for Queensland and coming through the junior ranks with Queensland teams," Wright said.

"It will be nice to take into the job and attitude of wanting to work with the clubs rather than against them."

Wright's appointment comes as no surprise.

Last year he expressed a keen interest in a move south to coach South Melbourne in the national league this season.

Wright, 37, played for seven seasons with South Melbourne before returning to Brisbane for the final five years of his illustrious playing career.



It culminated in the Brisbane Strikers historic grand final victory over Sydney United, under Frank Farina at Lang Park.

Wright coached in the Queensland premier league for only two seasons, winning the premiership with Brisbane City in his first season and



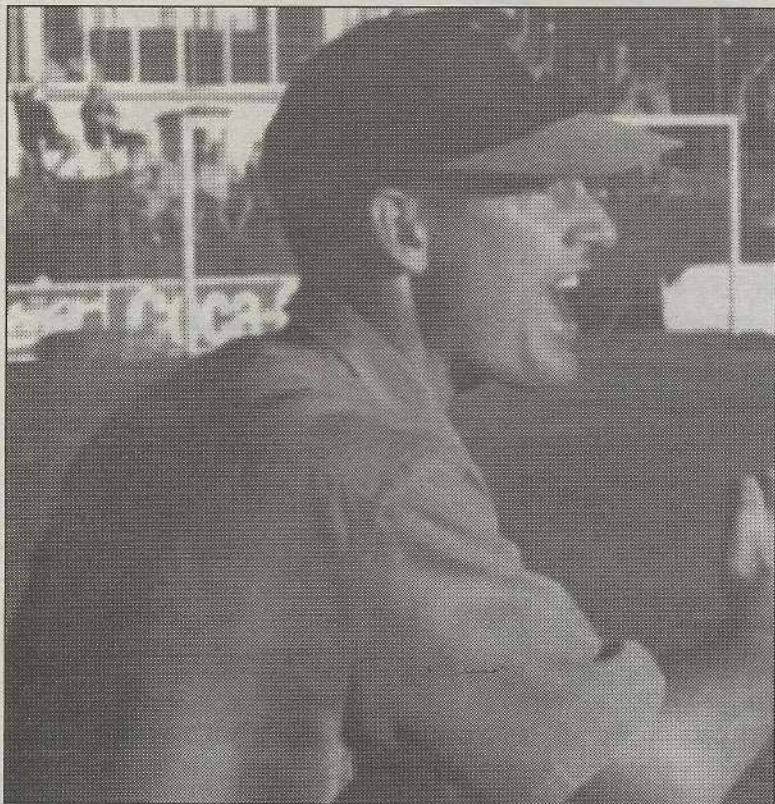
Miron Bleiberg: Former Queensland State Coach.

won last year's grand final and Queensland Cup.

Business commitments almost forced Wright to step down from Brisbane City last year, but he decided

to stay on with the club.

However, coaching the Queensland side will not impact on his hotel business operation in Brisbane.



Danny Wright: Newly appointed Queensland Coach.

# Knop knocks Knights over Colonial

By Bert van Bedaf

**I**t was a case of Knop versus Knights and by the end of the weekend it looked very much like Soccer Australia chairman Ian Knop had been bitten on the ear.

The Melbourne club came out fighting when Knop declared the Knights had erred in not staging their second derby with South Melbourne at Colonial Stadium.

The first derby in round 5 last November drew 10,396 spectators at the 50,000-capacity stadium. It was South's home game. The Knights won 1-0 and the match was a fizzer in a near-empty stadium.

This time around the Knights wanted to do something special. But they failed in their bid to sign Frenchman Eric Cantona for a guest appearance for last Sunday's derby. They also failed to sign back-up Italian star Toto Schillaci. The plan of staging the second game at Colonial was shelved and the Knights played at Knights stadium instead.

Knop howled down the decision in a scathing press release last Friday.

"Melbourne soccer fans had the opportunity to witness an appealing derby game between the Knights and South Melbourne at the spectator friendly Colonial stadium, but instead the Knights have ignored the potential for a big crowd and chosen the less popular Knights stadium as the venue," Knop said.

"It was only a few months ago where South Melbourne got over ten thousand people to Colonial Stadium for the derby game. It was by far their best home crowd this season, and here we have another



Colonial Stadium: The intended venue for the Melbourne derby.

opportunity to play our game on a bigger stage and we decide against it. It just disappoints me.

"I cannot highlight the point enough that Melbourne is an important soccer market for us in Australia, and I want to see the game develop in this city to the potential we believe that can be achieved.

"It is the reason we chose Melbourne last year as the host of the November World Soccer Series and our on-going focus for the continued improvement at (SA) Board level," said Ian Knop.

Knights director Alen Rados, who by the way is a fervent backer of playing at Colonial stadium and wants the Knights to play games there in the future, if the club can come to a financially viable agreement with owner Channel Seven, felt Knop had overstepped the mark.

"I think Ian Knop was a bit out of order. He should have armed himself with facts first. Attacking a club is a retrograde step," Rados said.

"We made the decision purely on economic grounds. Of course, we are disap-

pointed. The fact that we didn't play (at Colonial) was a step back.

"But we tried everything. We had plan A (Cantona) and when that failed we tried plan B (Schillaci) and that failed.

"On balance, Knights stadium still is a viable venue, there's no doubt, but sooner or later we must make the switch to Colonial (stadium)," he said.

The derby at Knights stadium attracted 6,678 spectators, less than the first derby at Colonial, but profitable for the Knights, who earned much-needed income from

gate takings, parking and catering.

Knights chairman Harry Mrksa was totally unimpressed with the Knop outburst and quoted in the Melbourne press as saying, "He (Knop) doesn't know what he's talking about (when he talks of a big crowd)," Mrksa said.

"His only knowledge of club football is when he was in charge the time Canberra (Cosmos) went belly-up. We're battling to survive till next week.

It's the position they (Soccer Australia) have put soccer in," he said.



Ian Knop: Angered over the Knights decision to play the derby at Knights Stadium.

# Gary Philips: The Youngest Squad In The National League

By Mark Stavroulakis

According to a recent study by Soccer Australia, the Olympic Sharks boast the youngest team in the league. With an average age of 23.14 years, the Sharks show no fear in promoting their youngsters onto the top level of football in Australia.

One such coach promoting the Youth development into the Sharks is current mentor of the side, Gary Philips.

Having previously taken the QAS (Queensland Academy of Sport), in the National Youth League, Gary realised the enormous potential youth players had in the game.

At the moment, Philips holds the record of fielding the youngest team in the National League, he believes it's a stepping-stone towards the Sharks future. "It really means a lot to have the youngest team in the league. It also means that a lot of hard work is needed in order to teach these youngsters to develop as world-class players.

The one thing I notice about the young players is their level of enthusiasm, they're always willing to learn new things. It's also evident that they are fearless, they believe they are good players and they have shown it week in week out. In my mind, the young lads we have at moment have been very mature. This is shown through the consistency of the squad that have achieved admirable results in recent

weeks", said the former QAS coach.

With so many young players to choose from, Philips is surely blessed with some top class talent. The coach of the Sharks regards players such as Jade North, Wayne Shroj, Andrew Durante and Dylan Macalister as Olympic's finest in the youth department.

Apart from the first grade squad, there are many future stars primmed for success in future years to come at the club. "Fred Agius is a very talented 18-year-old we have at the clubs youth side at the moment. He is an exciting player who in years to come will be a big asset. We also have a young Japanese player, Hiro Ishida. He has played in the J-League and has been a part of the Sao Paulo youth scheme for a couple of years; yet another player to watch out for.

Lastly, Zenon Carvella. He's already had a taste of first team football, I believe with more introductions through time, he will develop into a quality player. Zenon has the quickest feet at the club and has an outstanding dribble, something that is hard to find in young players. Today", said Gary.

It's been quite some time now, FIFA released a new rule in Australia that no one under the age of 18 can sign for an overseas club. Coach Philips believes it was the right decision as more talent stays and develops in the country. "I think maturity plays a big role in the development of a young player. Australia is a great nursery for young lads to strut their stuff against

older players and I believe with this new rule in place, it will help them hone their skills as preparation for the big time overseas", said Philips.

The 38-year-old has a further year on his contract and wants to plan an even bigger and more prepared season next year. "I received the job a week before the

National League started. It was hard at first as I did not know the boys well, but as time went on, I developed a friendship with them all.

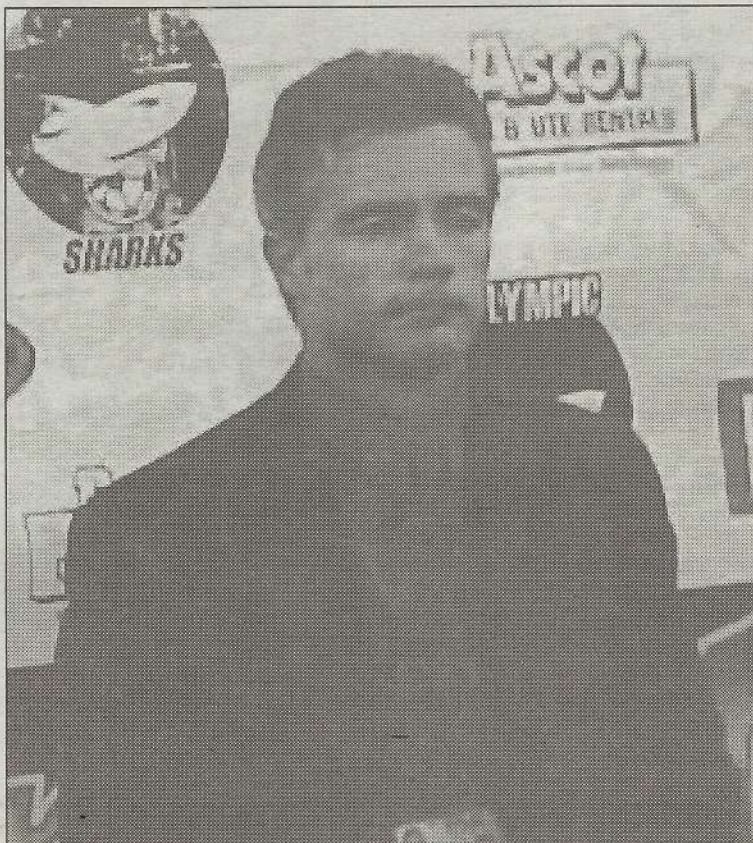
Next year there will be a major overhaul in planning for a better pre-season for the club. 70% of my current squad missed pre-season, a huge statistic that I hope to fine tune, come next year. If the club go through in having Leeds take over, it would benefit us a squad in a more professional way. I'd also like to work on the youth development in our local area, as that is where the future is", said the confident coach.

At this stage of the season, the Sharks sit in a top three position, and through recent indications, are improving immensely as a squad.

Tipped by many people as being the only side to match the current leaders Perth Glory, the Sharks have proved many critics wrong in their attacking style of football.

"At the end of the day we want to achieve our current goals and that is to develop as a side, and in doing that, win championships.

The club and its supporters demand success — bringing top players, alongside our current crop of youth stars. However it's a matter of being consistent. I love the club and its supporters and would do anything to bring back the title for the Sharks", ended Philips.



Gary Phillips promoting youth players for Olympic Sharks' future.

## OLYMPIC SHARKS VS NEWCASTLE UTD



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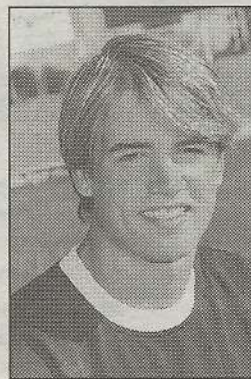
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# National Soccer League

## Newcastle United 2 Adelaide City Force 1

By Pano Tagaroulis

**T**hunderstorms kept the crowd down to 7,206 at Energy Australia Stadium on Friday night as Newcastle United took on the Adelaide Force.

The hum of a samba rhythm, a permanent fixture at Newcastle home games, and an even playing surface suggested a high quality affair was about to unfold.

United was looking to consolidate its second place position while Adelaide, although still a possibility for a finals spot, was there to ensure the once Premier side of Australian football finished the season with its pride in tact.

In the 7th minute, after a tentative start by both teams, Carl Veart delivered a telling cross into the United box to an unmarked Alex Moriera. Predictably the Brazilian maestro finished in style silencing the Newcastle faithful.

The first twenty minutes belonged to the away side with an 18th minute shot from Socceroo Aurilio Vidmar resulting in a scramble to clear the ball on the United six-yard box.

A 23rd minute shot by Scott Turnbridge was spilled by Daniel Beltrame with no Adelaide players following the effort.

The Newcastle midfield began to assert itself with some timely ball winning efforts by Peter Tsekenis and some untracked runs into dangerous positions by Matthew Bingley.

Milan Blagojevic's passing game became the focal point of the United forward momentum. A 25th minute Blagojevic cross, found the head of Scott Baillie, who was able to loop the ball over the despairing dive of Daniel Godley.

Adelaide City however, was still looking dangerous on the break. A typical Force counter-attack in the 34th led to a Moriera, Beltrame one on one with the latter winning the dual.

United created three further chances in the first half, the first of which resulted in a Robbie Middleby cut back that was not punished.

Matthew Bingley tried his luck with a thunderbolt from a Masi lay off that went rocketing over the bar.

Middleby then provided another cross that was headed over the bar by Masi.

The second stanza saw some enterprising



Scott Baillie: Opened the scoring for Newcastle.

football from both sides. It was evident a 1-1 score line was unsustainable. An ambitious shot by Lucas Pantelis in the 46th minute was followed by a Moreira header in the 47th.

The next two opportunities fell to Esala Masi with a 22 metre shot in the 49th minute and a 50th minute header from a Joseph Schirripa cross.

Some sublime skill from Alex Moreira mesmerised the United defense in the 54th minute. However a lack of support led to the cut back being cleared by an eager Newcastle defence.

In the 57th minute Ian Crook replaced a tiring Esala Masi for Daniel McBreen.

Newcastle began to take hold of the match with a Matthew Bingley header in the 58th minute and a Milan Blagojevic free kick being punched clear by a diving Daniel Godley in the 60th.

A 61st minute free kick led to a controversial decision, when Con Diomis disallowed a Milan Blagojevic free kick that took a slight deflection before hitting the back of the net.

An Adelaide City free kick in the 65th minute was delivered by Lucas Pantelis resulting in some United confusion before the ball

was cleared.

Ian Crook threw Travis Dodd into the fray for Joseph Schirripa.

Although United dominated possession Adelaide was able to cause some headaches with some smart counter attacking moves that lacked a partner for the ever dangerous Moreira.

In the 70th minute some skill on the edge of the box by Joel Griffiths led to an unsupported cut-back.

An Adelaide substitution followed, with Ivan Karlovic being introduced to plug up the Adelaide left side, which appeared to be wavering.

Another amazing bit of skill resulting in a cut back in the 77th minute, this time by Pantelis, had this writer wondering if he was in South America.

The only yellow card shown by the referee was reserved for Aurilio Vidmar for some remonstrations following a free kick.

In the 86th minute Zoran Matic replaced Pantelis with Mislav Saric.

Just as the fourth match official indicated the three minutes of injury time remaining Middleby picked the ball up on the left side and ran at the Adelaide defence. He cut inside and let fly with a driving, looping shot that thumped into the back of the Adelaide net.

On balance, a home win was the correct result although the speed of the Adelaide counter attack did catch the United defence napping on occasion. The game was an open free flowing affair that was well worth the admission price.

## Football Kingz 0 Wollongong Wolves 0

**I**t was a case of missed chances at North Harbour Stadium last Friday night as the Football Kingz failed to win all three points against last year's champions Wollongong Wolves.

The match was played in tough circumstances as rain set in on the Kiwi surface.

It took 20 minutes before any real chances fell as Wolves young gun Naum Sekulovski went close with a good shot but failed to trouble Kingz custodian Michael Theoklitos.

With the absence of suspended striker Paul Urlovic, the tough job was left to Campbell Banks and Andy Vlahos, who at times found it tough to communicate. Both were thwarted numerous times by a rock hard Wolves defence.

It took the home side 34 minutes before their first real chance fell as nippy striker Vlahos showed great skill but unfortunately skewed his shot wide.

Controversy struck the Kingz in the 38th minute as a well-taken goal by ex Olympic star George Goutzioulis was disallowed due to an infringement in the middle of the park. Referee Neil Fox had blown for a foul on Vlahos and should have played the advantage, as Goutzioulis continued his run though the Wolves defence. His goal however was singled out and the match remained a stalemate.

The Kingz continued to pile on the pressure and in the 40th

minute had a golden opportunity to put themselves in the lead. Vlahos was again involved as his shot inside the box, was brilliantly saved by Wolves keeper Dean Anastasiadis. The Wolves number one parried the ball straight to an advancing Harry Ngata, only to see his header go well over the bar.



Harry Ngata: Always looked dangerous in attack.

The second half saw a much-determined Kingz outfit as the home side searched endlessly for that vital first goal.

Ron Cory's men seemed to be on the back foot for the majority of the match, but continued to battle on in defence.

The best chances in the second half fell to the Kiwi side as that

vital first goal seemed to have eluded Fallon's men.

Campbell Banks over ran the Wolves defence and gave a precision ball to Chris Jackson, who, from five metres, was unable to put the home side in the lead.

Minutes later, Anastasiadis produced a fine save to thwart a powerful shot from Ngata, but it

wasn't to be for the Kingz as the match finished a scoreless nil-all draw.

The draw has left the Kingz side with 14 points who still sit at the foot of the ladder, while the Wolves sit outside the six as hopes of a revival are still on the cards.

## Parramatta Power 1 Olympic Sharks 0

By Mark Stavroulakis

**P**arramatta Power stepped up a gear last Saturday night after defeating high flyers Olympic Sharks 1-0 at Parramatta Stadium.

Prior to the match, both sides were desperately seeking three points, especially the Power. The home side had the chance to cement themselves into the top six with a win, while the Sharks needed the points to stay in touch with the top two.

It was a different lineup for Olympic who had Lindsay Wilson away for trials in Holland, while consistent defender Ante Juric pulled out with a groin injury.

The game started off fashionably fast as both sides missed a number of clear-cut chances to give their respective sides the lead.

One thing evident in the match was the Power's commitment, as the home side piled on big tackles that seemed to have scared their opponents off the field.

Olympic new boy Ante Milicic was watched ever so closely by 'hard man', Peter Bennett, who rarely gave the former United striker an inch to strut his stuff.

It was a titanic battle in midfield in the first half, where most of the possession was shared.

Dave Mitchell's men stepped up the pace towards the end of the opening half when in the 41st minute, Wayne O, Sullivan's brilliant header was cleared off the line by Sharks youngster Andrew Durante.

With countless attacks in the Sharks half, the home sides pressure

finally paid off in the dying stages of the first half. Former Olympic defender David Barrett started and finished off a lovely move to give his side a one-nil lead just before the break.

The 32-year-old veteran defender had played a lovely one-two with Zlatko Arambasic, which then saw Barrett continue his run, who then took a fierce shot from the edge of the area that gave Olympic custodian Clint Bolton no chance.



David Barrett: Scored against his old club.

The second half saw Garry Philips' men come to life with Troy Halpin and Tommy Pondeljak going close on various occasions.

However, credit went to the Power defence of Barrett, Orlic and Tobin who thwarted most of the away sides' attack.

The Power's plan to stop Milicic had worked, as the Sharks star limped off in the 73rd minute and for the majority of the match was kept quiet.

Towards the end of the match, Parramatta Power had the chance to

seal victory when live wire striker Johnny Buonavoglia gave an inch perfect pass to Bennett, who smashed his shot against the cross-bar, much to the Shark fans relief.

Mark Shield ended the match holding two minutes of stoppage time, with the Power grabbing an all-important three points to give the side a chance to compete with a top four spot.

The Sharks had Halpin as their best as the dynamic midfielder tried endlessly in creating chances. Andy Packer was also solid as the speed star matched up with another in Ahmad Elrich.

While at the other end, the Power had Dave Barrett as best on the park, not only in defence, but his attacking skills shone out superbly. Peter Bennett also had a good match

showing his never-say die attitude, while Power keeper Les Pogliacomi kept a clean sheet and saved his side a few times as the match went on.

The loss, a surprise to many of the Shark supporters has left the side a few points shy of next best place Newcastle.

The pair meet this week in an all important match where Philips hopes his men can get back to winning ways, during the second half of the National League season.

# National Soccer League

## Northern Spirit Brisbane Strikers

2  
2

By Daniel Kuzlow

**S**trikers, substitute Michael Baird snatched an 83rd minute equaliser to rob the Northern Spirit of a rare home victory, with the 2-2 draw leaving both teams within striking distance of a much coveted

top three position.

The game was alive after only two minutes, when the home side took the lead following a John Hutchinson ground-ball cross from the left hand side, that was played into the path of Pablo Cardozo who nudged it on to the waiting Scott Thomas who scored to the

left of former Everton and Crewe Alexandra goalkeeper Jason Kearton.

Northern Spirit looked set for a half time lead before Peter Grierson, restored scoreboard parity with an opportunist strike that left many Northern Spirit fans dumbfounded.

With Grierson in possession from an acute angle, the Brisbane number six struck the ball across the face of the goal, past Spirit keeper Paul Henderson, into the opposite side of the net.

On 75 minutes Spirit striker Adrian Cervinski scored what was regarded as the goal of the match when after receiving the ball in the middle of the pitch, broke away down the right flank, to cut into the penalty area. Kearton parried Cervinski's initial shot into the striker's path for the NSL journeyman to clinically finish the rebound.

The remaining 15 minutes of this free-flowing contest produced one goal and once again more heartbreak for the loyal Spirit army deprived of regular home victories.

Michael Baird headed home to give the visitors a valuable point to comfort them on their long trip home. North Sydney Oval, not regarded as a refuge for frayed soccer tempers was to turn into melee when Spirit custodian Paul Henderson was involved in a scuffle with his Brisbane opponents buoyed on by their rather late equaliser.

The result leaves the Spirit in 6th position on 23 points while the Strikers rest in fourth spot on the ladder equal on 26 points with the Olympic Sharks.



Matthew McKay: Young strikers star made a stunning debut.

## Sydney United Perth Glory

1  
2

By Daniel Kuzlow

**L**eaders Perth Glory maintained their lead at the top of the National Soccer League table, thanks to goals from leading marksman Damien Mori and Nick Mrdja, in a come from behind effort that sank the Sydney United Bravehearts at the Sydney United Sports Centre.

A two-goal burst in five minutes from the visitors cancelled out the opening strike from Commins Menapi that came in the 63rd minute.

A perfectly weighted ball was floated over the top for Menapi to beat the offside trap of the advancing Perth Glory defence. After controlling the ball on the bounce and being left one-on-one against Jason Petkovic in the Glory goal, Menapi volleyed to the right of the helpless Australian International and into the waiting goal.

From that point, Perth began to increase effectiveness of their play and duly equalised seven minutes after the United goal when Damien Mori received a cross and with the wealth of National League experience behind him, shot immediately on the turn to beat Vilson Knezevic guarding the United goal.

Some five minutes later in the 76th minute, Nick Mrdja sealed all three points for the League leaders. After Mori had beaten a swag of United defenders, he slipped the ball to the waiting Mrdja who managed to beat Knezevic in a one-on-

one situation and emphasising the finishing prowess of the Glory team.

With the win Perth extended their lead

at the top to 42 points, 11 clear of Newcastle United in what has been a run-away season so far for the West Australian based professional outfit.

Sydney United however remain camped in the lower third of the table on 16 points, just two points ahead of the bottom placed Kingz FC and a single point ahead of Adelaide City Force.



Damien Mori: Scored his 13th goal of the season.

## Melbourne Knights South Melbourne

2  
3

By Bert van Bedaf

**T**he Knights have won only twice at home this season and it is hurting them badly. Losing the derby against South Melbourne at Knights Stadium last Sunday pained them even worse.

A dazzling opening ten minutes, netting two goals, and a last minute strike by teenager Massimo Murococa earned South a 3-2 win at the Knights, despite having Steve Panopoulos sent off in the 40th minute.

South played with ten men for 50 minutes and not only did they resist the Knights' pressure until the 84th minute before Joel Porter scored the equaliser with his second goal for the match, they clinched a gutsy victory with a minute to spare.

The inspired Lakesiders struck the winner in the 89th minute, when Murococa shrugged off stopper Sash Oggenovski and fired into the far corner.

"We were confident at the start, but two goals in ten minutes set us back and we were struggling. The boys are dejected," Marth said.

"We attacked for 70-odd minutes, but luck wasn't on our side and we paid the consequences. Playing away has been good, but we should also be playing well at home," he said.

South coach Eddie Krncevic obviously looked pleased with the outcome.

"It's good to get the three points. It's never easy against the Knights at home. We got two early goals at the start, but when we had a player sent off we were up against it. Up until Panopoulos was sent off we were cruising. After that we had to defend, but that was a normal reaction," Krncevic said.

"We had the bye last week and we've kept our momentum going. But we shouldn't be talking about finals. We take each week as it comes," a cautious Krncevic talked down any finals speculation.

Two monumental blunders set the Knights two goals in arrears early, almost deciding the outcome of the derby before it really got going, if not for some inspired scoring by Porter in the 43rd and after the interval.

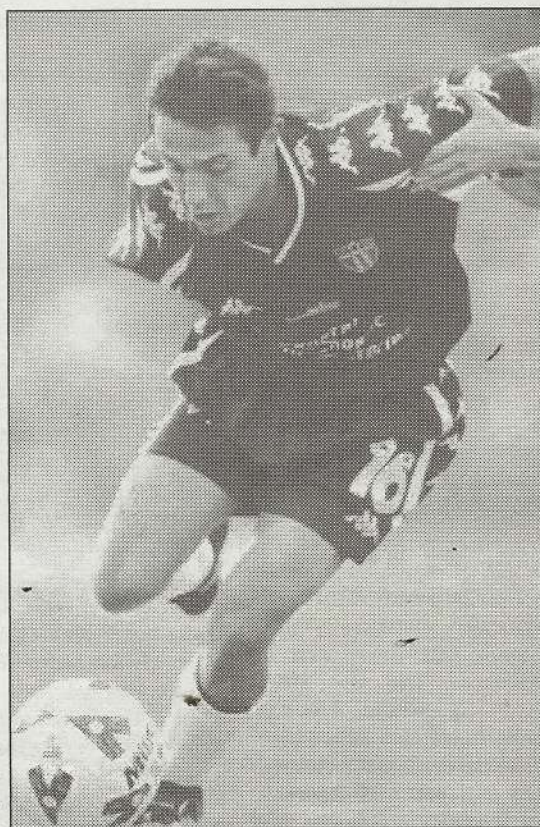
After only two minutes, Daniel Vasilevski stopped playing appealing for handball. The alleged offender Ray Sekulovski weighted his cross at

the far post, where Cōn Boutsianis slotted home the opener with a diving header.

Six minutes later, defender Rodi Vargas headed a long pass by Panopoulos back to keeper Martin John, who'd already come off his line. The ball ran past John and Vaughan Coveny took it into the empty net for South's second goal.

Marth, in attacking midfield, nearly headed a cross past Michael

Petkovic, but the South 'keeper, playing his 150th game, produced one



Massimo Murococa: Former U17 Australian International scored the winner for the Blues.

of his trademark reflex saves to deny the Knights their chance.

Leeds trialist, Patrick Kisorbo denied Toto Da Costa with a deft clearance, but the home side got a goal back with two minutes left in the first half.

De Jesus sent a short pass to Porter who blasted the ball high into the net at the far post. Petkovic got a hand to it, but the goal put the home side into the break only a goal down and a player up, offering the 6,600-strong crowd a knife-edged second half.

Minutes earlier Panopoulos was sent off for his second yellow. His first was for a foul on Ivo De Jesus and his second for a dive in the box.

The Knights opened after the break with a series of sustained attacks with close chances falling to Marth and substitute Daniel Debevc, but the equaliser went begging, until the 83rd when Porter found space on the right and drilled his second goal past Petkovic.

A draw seemed on the cards, until Murococa shot home the winner, stealing the show for South Melbourne, leaving the Knights to ponder another loss at home.

# Soccer has the most politics than ... anywhere else - Jeff Kennett



By Daniela Raco

**F**ormer Victorian premier JEFF KENNETT continues to make 'radio waves' in Melbourne having just announced during last week that he will take to the airwaves as a talkback host and director of radio in his own prime-time program.

As the Heineken Classic Golf Tournament was in full-swing in Melbourne, ABSW sat down with the powerhouse leader and found him to be equally conversant on the struggling code of soccer in this country. His years in power led to his comment that "there is more politics in soccer than anything he has ever known in his former life".

For all the charm, gloss and glitz, Mr Kennett 'delivers'. He ensures commercial confidence in a product, and ensnares the corporate sponsors. The Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne, and the 500cc Motorcycle Grand Prix at Phillip Island have indeed been a financial bonanza for Victoria.

As South Melbourne's Number One ticket holder, this man of stature has taken a keen interest in a game that is now truly a craft, and one of luck. Never one to shy away from the media, Mr Kennett sat down with ABSW for an early morning office chat (8am) to discuss the future of Australian Soccer, his roadmap for success, and the establishment of an Independent Commission to run the game.

**Does the competition (NSL) have a future in its present form?**

Yes, the competition has got to have a future because soccer is the only truly international football game and it has extraordinary potential in this country given the makeup of the citizens of this country. Its potential is almost exclusively unrealised. If soccer was better administered so that there is greater public confidence in the product, soccer would be the most powerful sport in this country and the most influential sport in this country, but for a whole range of reasons this is not the case. But having said that, it still has a reason for living, but it is nowhere near what it could be. The key to unlock the potential hasn't even been put in the keyhole yet.

**How do we promote the code in this country?**

Well we don't promote it very well at all. The majority of publicity associated with soccer at a

senior level is one of disputation, of argument, or failure. Not only sporting failure, but failure of administration, failure of standards, failure of governments, and that therefore reduces public confidence in the product.

It's why many of us advocate that those who sit at the top of the soccer tree — in the main sit there for their own vested interests and not in the interests of soccer, and it needs a shake up — it needs an independent commission of qualified people who will run soccer as a proper business to allow the game to grow, to encourage the public and sponsors to come on board.

At the moment unfortunately, there is no consistency in the promotion of soccer and it is certainly not promoted with a 5-10 year plan in mind. It's more to do with the day-to-day skirmishes, battles around financial survival and political intrigue within soccer. There is more politics in soccer than anything I ever knew in my former life.

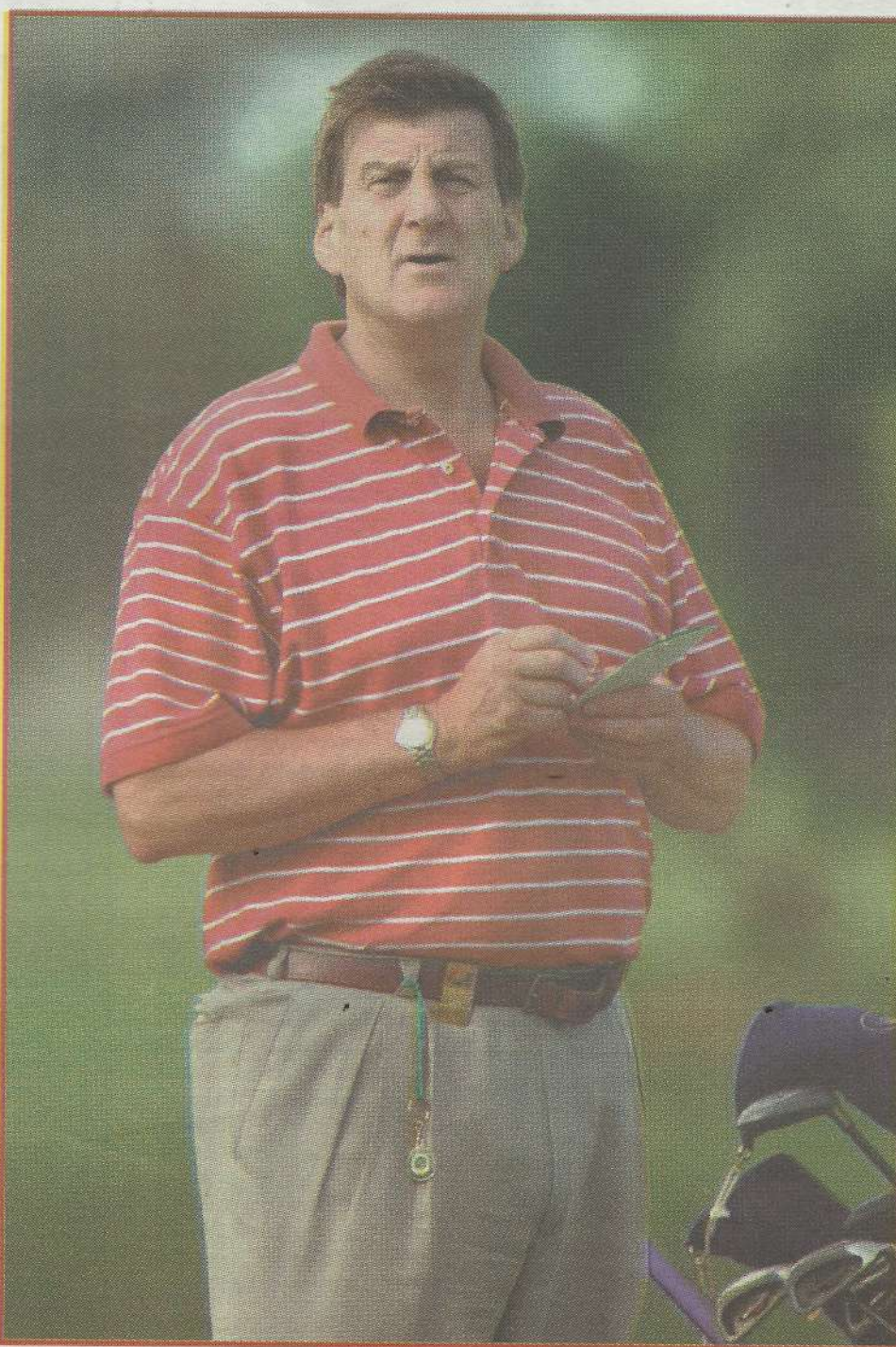
*Chairman, Ian Knop is open to the possibility of an independent advisory group, potentially headed by you. I envisage the role will be on the commercial, corporate, and advisory side of things. Is this something you can comment on at this point?*

He has never made that point known to me. It's not much point having advisory bodies. What you actually want is action. You can set up 110 advisory bodies, but at the end of the day the buck stops with the board, and the board have not been able to deliver a product that is commercially viable. Now I had hoped that when Ian came on board that he would oversee what I would describe as long overdue reform. He has decided to try and reform it from within. We have tried this many times before and it has failed. I would like to see him succeed, but I cannot see how he is going to do it given what has taken place in the last six months, but advisory boards are a sop for good management. There is no substitute for actually doing the job.

*You have put forward a proposal for the establishment of an AFL-style independent commission to run the game. Is this achievable?*

Yes it is achievable if those that are there — the stakeholders — have the courage to break from the past and establish an independent commission. AFL football was itself in diabolical trouble some 14-15 years ago and they themselves decided to reform and establish an independent commission and it has been to their everlasting credit and to the games credit and success that they did it.

Soccer Australia and its administrators can't even address the issue. Now it could happen if the soccer official said or the stakeholder said "enough's enough, let get this game moving", or it might happen if in fact these people fail so badly that in fact they are



Jeff Kennett, ex-Premier of Victoria during the Australian PGA Championship Pro-Am, at the Royal Queensland Golf Club, Brisbane, last year.

directed fundamentally by the courts to start anew, and that would be sad — they are better off grasping it themselves.

A 'secret' \$70m plan has been proposed to save our battling soccer league. It sounds like an exciting concept during a time of much needed reform. Have you been made aware of the plan?

Yes I have, and I don't think there is much substance in it. In fact, I would like it if there were a \$70m rescue package out there, but from what I've been told I would rather the \$100 in my wallet than the \$70m that has been promised. Where is the \$70m coming from?

*Are there changes you would like to see — especially the number of clubs in the competition?*

Well on the roadmap that we put forward, we said to start a new national competition you should start with around ten and build-up. I'd rather have 8-10 very strong clubs participating in a good competition, than having 14-16. But ultimately that depends on the mood at the time, and the availability of resources. So I don't

think you should actually fix on a number. Suffice to say, you want quality among the clubs that you have — however many you have. If you ignite public confidence in the game you are going to end up with lots and lots of people wanting to play soccer.

*Is removing a Melbourne club the way to go?*

Well I don't think so. But again, they have to be able to stand on their own two feet. We only have two Melbourne clubs left — Knights and South Melbourne — both of them are in financial difficulty. It would be a tragedy to see one or both go. In the new league, in my opinion, each State should be represented, and some states are going to be able to provide two teams.

They've got to be teams that are selected on their financial strength, on the administrative strength, on their government, and be prepared to accept disciplinary codes. Without all of that, in my opinion, no team is justified.

*Can the business community be convinced to invest in Australian soccer?*

Not at the moment...No. That's why there is only one or two major sponsors left.

IEC is probably the biggest, which is their marketing arm, and Channel 7. Outside of that, most have jumped off, because there is no plan — there is no product. They don't get value from it. But if you were to reform the product then I have no doubt at all that there would be substantial sponsorship.

*Another area to be addressed in this re-launch talk is the name of the impending competition, as well as the name of the governing body in this country. With past so-called reforms having little success, Isn't it logical to leave behind all remnants of past administrations and re-launch a fully re-vamped and re-titled league?*

There is not much point changing the name of something and being involved for changes sake, unless you're actually changing the product. So to me it is actually changing the workings of the game, than changing the name, that's important. If you want to

then change the name, logo, designs or stripes, so be it but it's about getting the fundamentals right first. You can have the glitziest name in the world, greatest logos, most tantalizing stripes, but if the products not there, it's nought for nought. So focus on the things that matter first. The proof is in the quality of the product.

*Do you have an understanding of the game?*

Yes I do. It's only in the last year or two that I've become vocal in terms of the administration and prior to that I've always been interested in what I call the art of soccer. I think soccer is an art form — a skillful game. I've never played it in that sense. I played a few games when I was in the army, but not competitively.

But my greatest interest is in the management challenge of getting it right to allow those with the skills to be able to play it, and be rewarded. The fact that I was never the world's best soccer player or didn't play it doesn't make any difference at all, because I don't intend to play it.

What I intend to do, if given the opportunity, is provide some leadership to allow those who want to play it, to play with certainty, confidence, and pride, to maximize their own potential on and off the field — be it the players, or the administrators. So you need a whole raft of people to make something good. And no, I'm not the most skillful soccer player, I'm not the greatest technician in terms of the rules...and that doesn't worry me at all.

*What is the Off-side rule?*

When someone is ahead of the ball.

*You are South Melbourne's Number One ticket holder. How did this come about?*

I think it started some time ago when we introduced the Grand Prix to Melbourne. One of the requirements was that we had to move the South Melbourne Soccer Club from the oval they were on, to another oval, and as a result of that we established them down where they are now. I then started attending their games, and they gave me the honour of making me their No 1 ticket holder.

*Is there a soccer player you admire?*

I actually like those who have stuck with the local league — Paul Trimboli and others. There is a wonderful raft of young players who have done a great service to the local game — some have obviously gone on and I think they are fundamentally very loyal to the game here.

The ones who are going to make this game work, are the 99% who run-around the park on a weekly basis.

Continued on  
Page 9

# 'Soccer has the most politics ...'



South Melbourne's captain Paul Trimboli: Admired by Kennett.

## Continued from Page 8

**Do you have a particular coach you admire?**

I like South Melbourne's Ange Postecoglou. He has taken us all to those victories. I think he is very good and very focused. He is now teaching the Young Socceroos, and I think he has got enormous potential.

**What league do you rate as the world's best?**

Obviously the one that gets the most coverage is the British, but you have a look at some of the work they are doing in Italy. I think the most colourful is the South American league. What I find interesting — you have a look at the Dutch League, and they play a very exciting game of football, and invariably have one or two of their players at the very top of the tree as is the case now, although haven't made the World Cup.

You get this dichotomy right throughout the game, because it is International. You get this spread of interest, spread of colour, and spread of life. The French play it particularly hard.

The French are very focused on their game, as are the Germans — so you get all these elements. Which is the best?

I don't know which is the best. At the end of the day, they all contribute to the whole. What is the whole? The whole is a global game played with a round ball, on a round surface.

**What makes soccer such a popular sport around the world?**

It is international. Many

countries have their own individual game, or code, or some sport.

But this is the truly international game of football, and to win the World Cup is seen as being the best in the world. We have a whole lot of other sports, but they are not as universal in their application to individuals. I think this is because you can play soccer anywhere — you can play it on the road, on the

side of a hill, or on a pitch. But, you can't play tennis, you can't go yachting, you can't play golf in those environments. Soccer you can play anywhere.

**Who is the last person you would like to be stuck in an elevator with?**

I can't imagine there would be anyone. At the end of the day, if you were stuck in a lift you would form a conversation, and you'll start

talking. It wouldn't worry me.

**If you could travel back in time, where would you go?**

I'm not interested in what happened yesterday. I read a lot of history and autobiographies, and things of that nature. I read them only because you might want to try and learn from them. But going back, is going to do something you've done before. That to me is history. The only thing that motivates me now is what is going to happen later in the day, next week, or next year. So I tend to be forward looking, rather than looking over my shoulder.

**What is your favourite late night snack?**

Dipping into a bowl of ice-cream, covered in hundreds and thousands.

**Who would you trade places with for a day?**

I wouldn't. I'm very happy with my life.

**If you could have any supernatural power, what would it be?**

I wouldn't want it. Once you start getting all those sorts of things you're denying the enjoyment, the challenge, and the mystery of life.

That's what should motivate us all — using your skills to actually carve out your own particular future. All this peripheral jazz about what if I had this, or what if I won tattslo'...well forget it.

**What gourmet cuisines can you whip up in the kitchen?**

Not many!! But I married a very good cook. I can do stuff from time to time if I have to, but my greatest skills are probably presiding over the preparation of meat products, chicken products, or seafood products on the BBQ. Typical Australian male.

**Who or what inspires you?**

The thing that inspires me is the satisfaction of the quality of life. There will always be people who are more financially wealthy; there will always be people who are less financial than you are.

But there comes a time in your life when it's getting the sorts of yins and yangs in balance. You don't want to be the wealthiest, or I never have, and you don't want to be the poorest.

You want to thoroughly enjoy life, and therefore to me the most important moment of the day is when



Ian Knop: Six month old chairman of Soccer Australia, whose reforms have not impressed Kennett.

you wake up and you realize you've got another 24 hours ahead of you. I get out of bed early and I look forward to the day, and it's a load of fun.

**What animal (or thing) best describes your personality?**

No idea, but I do have a great affinity with dogs which I have two at all times and have always had all my life, and I suspect I will until the day I drop.

**Do you have any hidden talents (that you can share with us)?**

None at all.

**What is the first thing you do when you arrive home?**

Normally try and locate my wife, and give her a hug and a kiss.

**If you could have box seats at any event in the world, what would it be?**

I would probably want to be at the most riveting performance of the Opera 'Tosca' — probably an outdoor performance in Rome, Italy, with beautiful sound, of a starry, starry night.

**How would you spend your last \$50?**

If it was my last \$50 before I knew I was going to fall off the twig I probably wouldn't worry about spending it. If I knew I wasn't going to fall off the twig and I had \$50, I probably wouldn't spend it — I'd invest it to try to make it \$100.



Jeff Kennett (left) chats with Crown Casino boss Lloyd Williams, during the 2001 Accenture Match Play Championship, also last year.

# Letters to the Editor

## More South American News

Dear Sir,  
I'm a constant reader of your publication and have wondered why South American soccer has not been shown.

is not having a section to interact with, apart from the Australian and few leagues across the world.

It would be great to see a change in the paper having a few news articles on what's happening over there.

South American soccer is blessed with so many great players, and through time, have gone across to Europe to play their trade.

Keeping an eye on what's going on in countries like Brazil, Chile, Argentina etc is and will be beneficial for the future of the game.

Yours,

**Fernando Medved,**  
Cabramatta, NSW

I understand the Italian and English leagues will over power the South American ones, but having an updated list on all the leagues with some reports of what's happening over there would be great.

Little do people know that there are many South Americans living in Australia who no doubt pick up the ABSW.

The unfortunate thing

## Italy-Australia - What Happened?

Dear Sir,

I'd like to know the full story about why, yet again, Australia has failed to play a huge country like Italy. I know its too late now, and will provide no positives to the squad after its exit from the World Cup qualifiers by Uruguay, but it would have been a great game to watch.

With so many quality players from both countries, it could have provided a cracker, of a match, but I guess that's Australian soccer, it wasn't meant to be.

To add insult to injury, the Italian squad has opted to take on our Successors Uruguay, what a slap in the face!

I just think that games such as these are a must for this country, to develop as a soccer nation.

Soccer is a sleeping giant in Australian sports, and will remain like this if nothing is done to improve the standard here.

Everybody involved in the game must put an end to their on going feuds and start thinking about how we can run the game properly.

One thing's for sure, the more support we get through the soccer fans outside, the better it is for the game.

Whether it means qualifying alongside the Asian or South American nations, we need to get games



The Italian national squad set to take on Uruguay.

against quality opposition, like Italy.

I hope for the next qualifications, the national side does get the much-needed game experience to further

the side's chances in qualifying for the World Cup.

We need to do many things to ensure Australia reach that elusive World Cup.

I just hope the next time we go through it all, we don't end up with the pain of losing again.

**Andrew Hart,**  
Geelong, VIC.

## Thanks for the Memories Nick Carle



Nick Carle: Currently making a name for himself for French First Division side Troyes.

Dear Sir,

I am writing in regards to the recent departure of one of Olympic's finest players, Nick Carle.

In my mind, Carle has been one of the best players ever to come out from the side, and showed in more ways than one that he was truly a valuable player.

His recent move to French soccer is by all means a

great move, and will no doubt benefit him.

The side he's signed for is doing really well by all reports, and I think Carle will benefit greatly with this transfer.

Being an Olympic junior for quite some time now, Nick was always loved at the club.

He started from a very young age and through time progressed into the player he has become today.

It's a good example to all the youngsters as well, that not leaving overseas straight away is a good thing.

Young Carle left later than expected but through time gained that much needed experience in becoming a huge profile

player in the National League.

I hear so much about young players going overseas under the age of 16, and seriously can't believe the huge risk they take.

It might pan out for some players, but for most, it's a dreadful experience.

Australia is renowned for producing quality youth players, why not stay that extra year or two to get the maximum experience needed.

One things for sure, it really benefited Nick Carle.

I hope your paper will continue to keep an update on this young player's move as he will no doubt be the next Aussie star.

**Shane Cairns,**  
Burwood, NSW

## South Melbourne's farcical friendly

Dear Sir

I am writing to inform the public about the recent friendly between South Melbourne and touring Chilean side Colo Colo.

Friendly matches are supposed to mean playing the match with no spite.

I know in this day in age, friendly games can end up in chaos, just look at the Australia-France match that left French star Dugarry injured after a careless Kevin Muscat attack.

However, having a side like Colo Colo, as guests into our country, the away side should have treated South Melbourne with more respect.

The game was marred with ferocious fouls and dirty tactics.

I am an avid supporter of the code was left bewildered at the state in which the game was played in other countries.

Not just the tackles, really rough tactics used in order to frustrate opponents, this in my mind are not welcomed in the game of soccer.

The game ended 1-1, but surely a repeat of this should not happen.

We must pick and choose our friendly games wisely in future as normal friendly games like this one could have ended worse than what it could have been.

Having players like De Amicis, Boutsianis and the

return of Paul Trimboli could have had reversed effects, with such players getting injured for no reason.

I am all in for having friendly matches in keeping the sides match fitness, but it must be against a side that knows full well that there will be no malicious play during the match.

South Melbourne is in mid-season mode, they still have a National League to play and amidst all their problems at the moment, they don't need anymore.

Just stating my point as I'd hate to see quality Australian players injure themselves in a game that is worth nothing.

**Mike Crawford,**  
DANDENONG, VIC



Action from the recent friendly between South Melbourne and Colo Colo.

## What Soccer means to Aussies

Dear Sir,

Lucas Neil has become the quiet achiever of Oz Soccer. While there is endless speculation about when Brett Emerton will join a Premier League club Neil has made the move to Blacktown with no fanfare but great success and little acknowledgment in Australia.

The "Brazil Nuts" at SBS and other critics of Oz soccer players overall ability consistently overlook a few critical facts.

1. Soccer is the bottom football code in Australia and is not a traditional Australian sport like its rivals.

2. As well as competing with the traditional football codes there is also cricket,

tennis, swimming, athletics, surfing, cycling, basketball and more. There are few countries in the world like Australia where young people from humble backgrounds have the opportunity to participate in such a wide menu of sports.

3. The large numbers of recreational soccer players in Australia (especially NSW & QLD) is misleading because only a few are serious about soccer. Worse still until recently many of our most talented prospects were poached by other sports.

4. Then there is this environment where there is this constant undercurrent of hostility towards soccer in Australia which often discourages and demoralises our

young players.

5. There is also a myriad of other distractions for young people in Australia that do not exist in most traditional soccer countries.

When you take all these serious problems into account as well as others not mentioned then it is as the astute Zoran Matic recently stated a case of Australian soccer having over achieved in the circumstances.

**R Melor,**  
Bondi, NSW

# OFF THE CROSSBAR



By Allan Crisp

## JAPAN FLOATS A LOAN AND A SOCCER PITCH

Just when we thought we had heard it all, Japanese technological ingenuity has devised the world's first dual arena, hover-craft, soccer pitch.

The remarkable concept enables the playing pitch to be floated from the indoor stadium to the outdoors, where the grass can be watered and generally pampered in natural climatic conditions.

Consadole Sapporo, the Japanese J League club currently training and playing friendly games in Adelaide, is the proud owner of the revolutionary Sapporo Dome Stadium.

The marvelously mobile invention is the key feature of the Sapporo Dome, a \$700 million dollar investment, specifically built as a 2002 World Cup venue.

The single slope conical-design of the stadium, nicknamed "Hiroba" has an inclination of 27 degrees to provide ideal viewing from all sections of the facility for its 42,000 capacity crowds.

"Hiroba" freely translated, means, "open space."

Constructed in Hitsujigaoka, on the outskirts of Sapporo, the conical-shaped stadium will be host to arguably the highlight match of the 2002 World Cup tournament, the England-Argentina game.

The magnificent, fully enclosed stadium is the home base for the Consadole club, which was originally based in Tokyo and owned by electrical giant, Toshiba.

When the professional J League was formed, Toshiba relocated its interest in

the club to Sapporo, securing corporate support from several companies and the Local Government.

Last year was Consadole Sapporo's first season in the J League when it finished a creditable 11th in the 16-team competition, earning 34 points with 10 wins and five draws from its 30 games.

While soccer is unquestionably the major sport played at the Sapporo Dome, the fantastic facility also is used for baseball and concerts.

Sapporo is the fifth largest city in Japan with a population of 1.8 million. It has successfully hosted the Winter Olympics, Winter Universiade and the Asian Winter Games.

Despite the relatively short soccer history in the region, the world game has been developing rapidly, with the number of teams registered in the association doubled over the past 20 years.

Consadole Sapporo has marketed its product extensively and is justifiable proud of the strong ties it has established with the local people.

"Our supporters always cheer as if they are the 12th player, sharing joy, happiness and sorrow with the players," is the official catch cry.

The Consadole party arrived in Adelaide for its winter-break training on January 23.

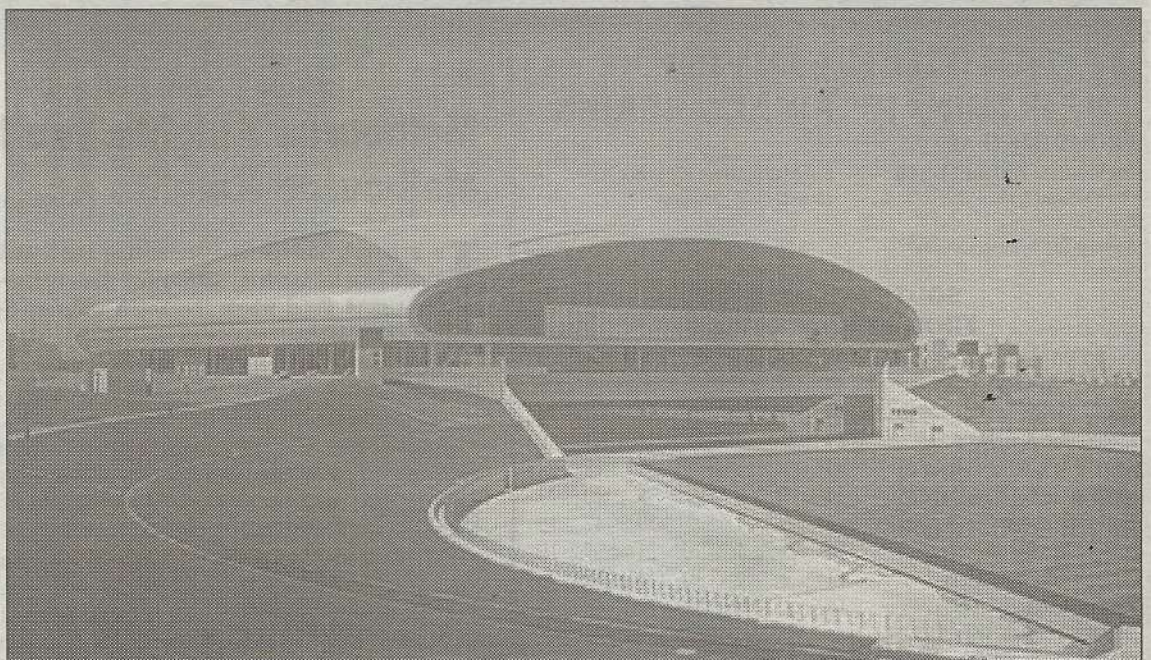
Section one of the training program saw Sapporo based at the Southern Sports Complex at McLaren Vale, where the players worked out at the Perfect Fit Gymnasium.

The team now is in the throes of the second section of the visit, which began with a 4-0 win over the South Australian State team at Hindmarsh Stadium.

Sapporo boasts two national team strikers, Takafumi Ogura and Hiromi Kojima, three Under 22 internationals, Yasuyuki Konno, Koji Yamase and Yosuke Fujigaya and an Under 18 national team representative, Hiroshi Kichise.

Like most other J League sides, Consadole also has introduced Brazilian flair with the addition of Samba dancers, Max Sandro, Biju and Robson.

Tokyo Verdy, another perennial visitor to Adelaide arrived last Tuesday for an extended mid-season J League training camp.



The Sapporo Dome, nicknamed "Hiroba" – a venue of the 2002 FIFA World Cup™ – comprising one open and one closed and its most prominent feature is the "hovering soccer stage," which is the world's first air hovering mobile system. The natural turf soccer field in the open arena can be moved into the all-weather closed arena.

## SA CAPTAIN IMPRESSED

State team captain Michael Brooks paid a glowing tribute to Consadole Sapporo after the J League club toppled SA 4-0 in the opening tour match.

"Sapporo is lightning fast and they are much improved since they played here last year," Brooks said.

Meanwhile, Jun Udagawa carved his name into local soccer history books by being the first Japanese-born player to represent South Australia at senior level when he played against Sapporo.

He started the match on the bench but joined the on-field action for the final 10 minutes.

The Campbelltown City midfielder is in SA on a student visa, but hopes to become a permanent resident after his completes his engineering degree.

Udagawa, 23, joined the Red Devils as a junior and won the SASF John Francis award as the best Premier League Youth Team player in 1998.

The SA team which played Consadole was – Robbie Matosevic, Daniel Menecchella, Frank Sergi, George Tsonis, Mark Yates, Ric Cerracchio, Michael Brooks, Sam Barbaro, Nathan Day, Aaron Westervelt, Ryan Moore, Jun Udagawa,

Jason Trimboli, Duane Dobson, Bill Misailidis, Ben Moore.

## STARS SHINE

Metro Stars became the first team to book a SASF quarter-final berth after surving two games in two games of Group E action.

Adelaide Galaxy continued to dominate Group A, but had to battle hard to topple Cumberland Foxes 2-0.

The wedding bells chiming for Marcin Kierno broke up the old Blue Eagles gang, particularly their midfield as the Eagles were forced to a scoreless draw against Cobras.

White City Woodville and Raiders also shared the points in a 1-1 draw after Sean Widera converted a penalty for Raiders, but former Adelaide City defender Brad Armour rescued a point for the Warriors three minutes later.

Campbelltown City clobbered the young Panthers side 5-0 to enhance their finals chances, but beware, the Panther cubs are learning rapidly.

Playford Patriots atoned for their disappointing loss to Olympic in the first round of summer series battle by downing Pirates 3-0.

Alby Kidd's lads were on top early with goals to Shane Pearce and the coaches' kid, Steve Kidd.

Driven forward by George Haralabakis, Lee Robertson and Adam Perre, further chances fell to Pearce, Luchio DaRocha and Kidd, while last season's Under 19 player, Robbie McMillan showed considerable promise.

Diminutive John Manca inspired the Pirates to greater effort in the second half, but they were unable to reduce the deficit.

New Patriots signing Mario Staltari defended strongly and was well supported by Andy Thomson, while goalkeeper Neal Cotgrove pulled off a brilliant save.

Another Kidd capture, Con Georgiou, gave the Patriots attack a new dimension as he made the score 3-0 with 20 minutes remaining.

Last summer series finalists Modbury Jets ended their campaign with a 1-0 win over Para Hills, but two earlier losses means the Jets summer fling has ended.

## SA SUMMER NIGHT SERIES Results

### Round 1.

#### Group A

Blue Eagles .3 C'land Utd .0

Goal-Scorers

F. Sergi 2

M. Pirone 1

Adelaide Galaxy 9 Cobras . . . 1

Goal-Scorers

J. Tsekinis 3 F. Lara 1

A. Westervelt 2

N. Dawe 1

P. Karitevis 1

J. Ford 1

D. Ferreira 1

#### Group B

White City . . 2 Adelaide City 5

Goal-Scorers

S. Stam 1 J. Mooney 1

D. Petrov 1 A. Pellegrino 1

R. Saraceno 1

M. Saric 1

M. Sancillio 1

#### Group C

Noarlunga . . 2 Pirates . . . . . 2

Goal-Scorers

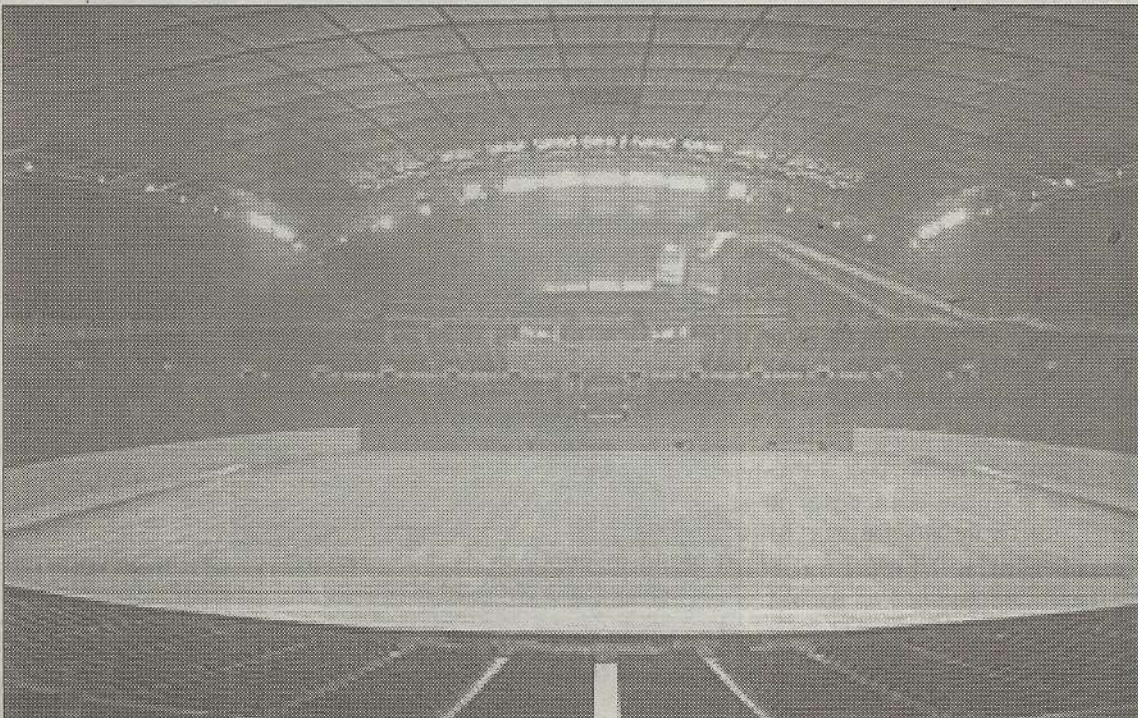
Jozef Kapral Scott Unglaube

David Forester Procopis Loizides

Playford 0 Olympic FC 1

Goal-Scorer

Galanopolous



The huge interior of the Sapporo Dome which will host the explosive match between England and Argentina.

ABSW's SA correspondent, Allan Crisp, former Australian international and ex-Adelaide City coach, John Perin and Peter Millar, can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson Homes/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-9am.

Perin and Crisp are joined by Blue Eagles star striker and SA captain Michael Brooks each Sunday for the SOS (Soccer on Sunday) program from 8.30am-9.30am when the latest NSL, local and overseas scores are aired along with fast breaking news, views and interviews.

# National Youth League

## SOUTHERN DIVISION PRELIMINARY FINALS SERIES

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 8

Melbourne Knights Youth  
(Bill Natsioulas 2, Daniel Rocco,  
Pelikan 2)

5 Melbourne Knights Ac  
(Boris Ovcin 2, Unknown)

4

### SOUTHERN DIVISION FINAL LEAGUE LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne Institute	14	12	2	0	61	12	38
Melbourne Knights	14	9	3	2	34	13	30
South Melbourne Eagles Ac	14	9	1	4	31	18	28
Melbourne Knights Academy	14	7	2	5	35	20	23
Bulleen Zebras	14	6	1	7	30	42	19
Albury Wodonga	14	3	1	10	21	37	10
Green Gully Cavaliers	14	2	2	10	13	38	8
Preston Lions	14	1	2	11	15	60	5

### GRAND FINAL SOUTH MELBOURNE INSTITUTE V MELBOURNE KNIGHTS YOUTH

Name	Team	Goals
Dimitri Tsiaras	Sth Melb. Inst.	14
Steven Pace	Sth Melbourne	13
Bill Natsioulas	Melb. Knights	11
Xhezair Sulemani	Melb. Knights	11
Marino Gasparis	Bulleen Zebras	9
Robert Dolevski	Preston Lions	8
Paul Presti	Bulleen Zebras	7
Kevin Pretty	Albury Wodonga	6
Steven Esposito	South Melb. Inst.	6
Seb Petrovich	South Melb. Eagles Ac	6

By Roy Hay

## Melbourne Knights Youth Melbourne Knights Ac.

5

4

In a torrid, strange and see-sawing game Melbourne Knights Youth beat its Academy side by five goals to four to win a place in the Grand Final where the Youth will face South Melbourne Institute once again.

The Academy finished with nine players and the Youth with ten after three participants received their marching orders. Anthony Pelikan opened for the Academy after only nine minutes and doubled that advantage after 32 minutes. Ramazan Tavsanoglu pulled one back for the Youth in fifty minutes, then Bill Natsioulas's first strike and an own goal saw the Youth ahead. Daniel Rocco scored in 62 minutes and Natsioulas again in 79.

But then the nine-man Academy mounted a storming fight-back and Boris Ovcin scored twice in 80 and 90 minutes to leave the Youth victory in doubt to the very end. Rocco, Serkan Oksuz and Serkan Doganay until he was sent off were best for the Youth. Dario Matkovic, Ovcin and Pelikan, again until sent off, were tops for the Academy.

### NORTHERN DIVISION - RD 19 FIXTURES POSTPONED MATCH FROM ROUND 17

WED 13-02-02 NSWIS Vs ACTAS 6.30pm, Valentine Sports Park

#### ROUND 19

NSWIS Vs Brisbane Toro 5.30pm Valentine Sports Park  
Wollongong Wolves Youth Vs AIS 4.00pm WIN Stadium  
QAS Vs Parramatta Power Youth 4.35pm Ballymore Stadium  
M. Stallions Youth Vs M. Stallions Colts 4.30pm Marconi Stad.  
Syd Utd Colts Vs N. Spirit Youth 5.00pm Syd Utd Sports Centre  
Oly. Sharks Youth Vs Newcastle Utd Youth 8.00pm Toyota Park  
ACTAS Vs Sydney United Youth 5.00pm AIS Soccer Field

## NORTHERN DIVISION RESULTS RD 18

Newcastle United Youth 3 AIS 3  
(McManus 6', A. Hughes 12' 47') (Danze 18', Own goal 30', Anstey 84')

Northern Spirit Youth v QAS  
(Match postponed due to inclement weather)

Parramatta Power Youth 2 Olympic Sharks Youth 0  
(Martin 26', Gavaghan 77')

ACTAS 2 Wollongong Wolves Youth 2  
(Spaleta 8' 14') (Farah 22' pen 47')

Marconi Stallions Colts 1 Sydney United Colts 0  
(Darwick 62')

Sydney United Youth 3 NSWIS 0  
(Ageyi 29', Clowes 53', Cop 82')

Brisbane Toro 1 Marconi Stallions Youth 8  
(Anabalon 4' 48' 60' 63', Care 37' 45' 90' pen, K. O'Brien 83')

### SOUTHERN DIVISION LEAGUE LADDER - ROUND 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power Youth	18	14	0	4	59	19	42
Wollongong Wolves Youth	18	12	2	4	46	25	38
Newcastle United Youth	19	12	2	5	39	25	38
Marconi Stallions Youth	18	11	2	5	41	16	35
Sydney United Youth	18	11	2	5	40	16	35
AIS	17	10	1	6	40	25	31
QAS	17	9	3	5	34	23	30
Olympic Sharks Youth	19	6	6	7	31	26	24
ACTAS	15	7	3	5	30	32	24
Northern Spirit Youth	17	5	5	7	31	34	20
Brisbane Toro	18	5	0	13	28	58	15
NSWIS	20	4	2	14	20	58	14
Marconi Stallions Colts	18	2	1	15	12	47	7
Sydney United Colts	18	1	3	14	12	59	6

# New boss, Waddell honoured

CEO of the NSW Soccer Federation, Mr. Robert Waddell, was named as the 2001 'Sports Administrator of the Year' at the NSW Sports Federation's 8th Annual Awards ceremony held at Stadium Australia last Tuesday, 5 February 2002.

The Award recognises individual achievement by a person who has displayed outstanding conduct in administration of a sport and/or activity connected with sport. Mr.

Waddell won the honour from a number of other category finalists in his first year in the top job at the

NSW Soccer Federation.

Mr. Waddell's recognition has capped off an enormous year, covering all the standard duties of a

CEO internal administration, commercial operations, competitions, state teams, coaching and elite athletes, appeal and tribunal structures, insurance, sponsorship, improving capital assets and marketing.

On the same evening that swimming superstar

Ian Thorpe was announced as the NSW Sports Federation's 'Athlete of the Year', Mr. Waddell said of his award, "It is

a distinct honour to receive this acknowledgment from many of my peers. The Award is recognition of the tremendous support that has been provided to me by a strong and determined Board of Directors, supportive staff and understanding stakeholders."

In accepting the award, Mr. Waddell acknowledged that Soccer for far too long as been regarded by public and media alike as the sleeping giant of Sports. With true conviction he told the Awards gathering that the future of the sport with impending unification between State Federations has now awakened the giant and that the gaze is firmly set on the horizon and the opportunities that it brings.

The Award was a first for the NSW Soccer Federation, which for decades has served with dedication, the many thousands of men, women and children who have continued to enjoy the World Game of soccer.



Robert Waddell: '2001 Sports Administrator of the Year.'

# NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

www.nswpremierleague.com



## FEATURE MATCH

### Central Coast Coasties



VS



### C'bury-M'ville Olympic

KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 16 February 2002

VENUE: Plum Park, Tuggerah St, Lisarow

The Coasties returned to the winners circle last Saturday night with a 4-0 demolition over Sutherland at Plum Park.

After going seven games without a victory, the win was a real shot in the arm for the club who keep alive their slim semi-finals chance with the three points.

But that was last week, and this weekend they meet the Berries head on in what looms large, as another must win game.

"For the first time in weeks we took our chances," said a relieved Coach Dale Eggleton after the Sharks match.

"We have been playing good football but our results haven't shown that and its been very frustrating for the team and our fans.

The week off was good and allowed us to think about our game a little more. The boys are a bit more

relaxed and that translated itself into points last weekend."

The only player on the injured list is Damien Smith who will be out a further two weeks with a groin problem while Peter Ritchie has been moved back into the stoppers role with great success to cover for the loss of Dane Hokin who has joined Blacktown City.

"Canterbury will be tough," said Eggleton, "but the mood in the camp after our win was terrific and we consider ourselves a good chance this week to keep that going."

While the Coasties were toasting their first success last weekend, the Berries were notching up win number three under new Coach Laki Konistis.

Since taking over the reins from John Xipolitis, Konistis and his hardworking assistant Spiro Hantzis have not lost a match in four

starts, prompting the Berries fans to again start thinking about a coveted Top Five spot.

"We are on a roll at the moment," said Konistis. "We have a settled lineup and we are gaining momentum with every start."

Yane Talcevski did enough in his appearance off the bench last weekend to suggest he will come into the Berries lineup, but with no injury concerns, Konistis is not expected to make any further changes.

"Our track record up on the Coast hasn't been good in recent seasons," concluded Konistis. "But in our favour is that we are meeting them at the right time and I am confident of a good performance from the team."

Round Four result: Canterbury-Marrickville 0 Central Coast 2 (Own Goal, Preston)

## SQUADS



Dane Hokin transferred from Central Coast Coasties to Blacktown City at the end of January.

**COASTIES:** 1. Matthew Collits, 2. Sean Matthews, 3. Marc Falzon, 4. Danny Burt, 5. Mitchell Daley, 7. Peter Preston, 8. Adam Peatey, 9. Damien Smith, 10. Mick Williams, 11. Kari Freeman, 12. Peter Leary, 13. Peter Ritchie, 14. Andrew Clark, 15. Gary Wilson, 22. Darren Moore. **Coach:** Dale Eggleton

**OLYMPIC:** 1. Les Bihari, 2. Greg Collins, 3. Christian Ortiz, 4. John Manolopoulos, 5. Mark D'Alessandro, 6. Andy Amegashie, 7. Con Paradisis, 8. Yane Talcevski, 9. Anthony Douranis, 10. Hussein Jomaa, 11. Aheleas Kotsopoulos, 12. John Pillemer, 13. Fernando Pellegrino, 14. Nihad Alemeic, 15. Manuel Papageorgiou, 16. Angelo Markopoulos, 17. Marcelo Guerrero, 18. Ali Salim, 19. Michael Kladis, 20. Tristan Tulloch. **Coach:** Laki Konistis

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES are proudly sponsored by the Central Coast Leagues Club

## PREMIER LEAGUE

### ROUND 15

Saturday February 16

1st Grade U19

Fairfield Bulls	v	Bankstown City	Nineveh Field	7:00pm	5:00pm
Belconnen BD	v	S'land Sharks	W Belconnen SG	7:15pm	4:00pm
Penrith Panthers	v	St George Saints	Andrews Rd Fld	7:00pm	5:00pm
Central Coast	v	C'bury-M'ville	Plum Park	7:00pm	5:00pm

Sunday February 17

P'matta Eagles	v	Blacktown City	Melita Stadium	7:00pm	3:15pm
Leichhardt Tigers	v	Bonnyrigg WE	Lambert Park	5:00pm	3:00pm

### ROUND 16

Saturday February 23

1st Grade U19

Cant-M'ville	v	Belconnen BD	Henson Park	6:30pm	4:30pm
Blacktown City	v	Fairfield Bulls	Gabbie Stadium	7:00pm	5:00pm
Bankstown City	v	Leichhardt Tigers	Jensen Park	7:00pm	5:00pm
Bonnyrigg WE	v	St George Saints	Serbian Centre	7:00pm	5:00pm
Sutherland Sharks	v	P'matta Eagles	Seymour Shaw	7:00pm	5:00pm
Central Coast	v	Penrith Panthers	Plum Park	7:00pm	5:00pm

### Rescheduled Fixtures:

**ROUND 11: Under 19:** Leichhardt Tigers v Parramatta Eagles, Wednesday 13 February 2002, 7pm

**ROUND 12: Under 19:** Leichhardt Tigers v Fairfield Bulls, Wednesday 27 February 2002, 7pm

**ROUND 13: Under 19:** Penrith Panthers v Leichhardt Tigers, Wednesday 13 March 2002, 7.15pm

**Under 19:** Central Coast Coasties v Blacktown City Demons, Tuesday 19 February 2002, 7.15pm

**1st Grade:** Central Coast Coasties v Blacktown City Demons, Wednesday 20 February 2002, 7.15pm



ST. GEORGE



BELCONNEN UNITED SOCCER CLUB



The Cafe La Scala Player of the Week after Round 14 of the NSW Premier League is:

Cafe La Scala

Stacy Alogdellis  
St George Saints

Cafe La Scala is located at Shop 32, Piazza Level, Italian Forum, 23 Horton St, Leichhardt - Phone: (02) 9572 8377



## Inside ... Inside ...

- From The Sidelines .....P15
- Match Reports.....P16-17
- Club Focus.....P18
- Scoreboard & Picture Gallery .....P19



# NSW Premier League



## PREVIEW ROUND FIFTEEN

## Friendship Cup Bushfire Appeal & Return of the Legends THIS WEEKEND!



**Penrith Panthers**

VS



**St George Saints**

**KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 16 February 2002**

**VENUE: Andrews Road Field, Andrews Road, Penrith**

While the Panthers season is all but over, they still continue to offer dogged resistance in every one of their outings.

They came close to knocking off the Tigers two weeks ago with a 1-1 draw but a 3-2 loss to the Berries has just about seen off their chances for the Top Five.

They are always hard to beat at Andrews Road where a vocal home crowd will test a Saints team that picked up its first win of the season against Leichhardt 3-2 at home. Coach Manny Spanoudakis will fancy his chances here in a game, which could go either way.

Round Four Result: St George 1 (Petratos) Penrith Panthers 1 (Hutchinson)

### SQUADS

**PANTHERS:** 1. Chad Taylor, 2. Jon Hawkins, 3. Chris Giometti, 4. Glenn Meilak, 5. Ben Wright, 6. Daniel Wells, 7. Dave Gardiner, 8. Paul Marosevic, 9. Rod Hutchinson, 10. Osvaldo El Ali, 11. Luke O'Connell, 12. Christian Lima, 13. Jason Sciberras, 14. Wayne Berrigan, 15. Danny Hinton, 17. Shane Hammond, 18. Gustavo Orcajo, 20. Tim O'Connell, 21. Ryan Noble, 25. Marty McCaffery, 26. Luke Boyd, 24. Kurt Van Arkels, **Coach:** Tony Rassmussen

**SAINTS:** 1. Stacy Alogdellis, 2. Mark Bariamis, 3. Nick Boliantitis, 4. Angelo Petratos, 5. Max Sevares, 6. Spyros Kladis, 7. George Maglis, 8. Bruno Beddoni, 9. Achilleas Markopoulos, 11. John Fotiadis, 12. Fabio Macolino, 13. Nabil Codmani, 14. Steven Papadopoulos, 15. Nick Mandic, 16. Simon Verrender, 17. Manny Spanoudakis, 18. Sal Zullo, 19. Mladen Damjanovic, 21. Brad Campbell, 22. John Christou, 23. Joshua Rufo, **Coach:** Manny Spanoudakis

PENRITH PANTHERS are proudly sponsored by Panthers World of Entertainment, Allied Pickfords Business Relocations, Prospect Credit Union, Wizard Home Loans, Soul Sports, Bonus Plus (Panthers World of Entertainment), Panarottis Pizza Pasta (Main Lobby, Panthers World of Entertainment), Penrith Press, Hawkesbury Radio 89.7



**Parramatta Eagles**

VS



**Blacktown City Demons**

**KICK-OFF: 7pm & 3.15pm, Sunday 17 February 2002**

**VENUE: Melita Stadium, Everley Rd, South Granville**

Undoubtedly the form side of the competition, the Eagles are challenging hard for top honours, but they must continue to win games.

With goalkeeper Jason Holmes in outstanding form and the likes of Paul O'Grady and Mirko Jurilj solid at the back, the Eagles are proving a very tough side to score against. In simple terms, Blacktown City is desperate. They have slipped out of the Top Five and haven't won a game since December 7th. Dane Hokin joined the club just prior to the transfer deadline, and his inclusion goes part the way to cover for the injuries to Damon Langan and Paul Yates.

In between the under 19 and first grade fixtures will be a 'Return of the Legends' match featuring some of the stalwarts of past eras of two of

Australia's greatest sporting clubs. See Page 18 for more information on this match.

Round Four Result: Blacktown City 3 (Imaya, Donev, Rastall) Parramatta Eagles 1 (Howarth)

### SQUADS

**EAGLES:** 1. Jason Holmes, 2. Daniel Borg, 3. Geoff Dwyer, 4. Malcolm Meilak, 5. Mark Reveley, 6. Mirko Jurilj, 7. Mauricio Islas, 8. Daniel Kukucka, 9. Anthony Mondello, 10. Tony Mittiga, 11. Jim Bakis, 13. Paul O'Grady, 12. Glenn Sprod, 14. Stephen Chipps, 15. Ben Delicata, 16. Geoff Howarth, 19. Daniel Cummins, 21. Joel Morgan, **Coach:** Tam Finlayson

**DEMONS:** 1. John Crawley, 2. Dane Hokin, 3. Damien Foxe, 4. Peter Sermanni, 5. Ben Willard, 6. Damon Langan, 7. Paul Dee, 8. Michael Smith, 9. Kain Rastall, 10. Naoki Imaya, 11. Jim Nikas, 12. Zlatko Donev, 13. Steve Riches, 14. David Reid, 15. Mark Hagger, 16. Patrick Gatt, 17. Luciano Berbis, 18. Graeme O'Donnell, 19. Chad Lewis, 20. James Wilkinson, **Coach:** Brian Brown

PARRAMATTA EAGLES are proudly sponsored by Parramatta Leagues Club & Bank of Valletta



**Leichhardt Tigers**

VS



**Bonnyrigg White Eagles**

**KICK-OFF: 5pm & 3pm, Sunday 17 February 2002**

**VENUE: Lambert Park, Marion St, Leichhardt**

The moment of truth for Tigers Coach Les De Celis and his troops. The Tigers have not won a game in over a month and have picked up just two competition points from their last four starts.

A loss last week to the bottom club St. George leaves Leichhardt in real danger of slipping from the Top Three without a win here. Bonnyrigg will be equally as desperate. Two losses in their past two outings has the White Eagles under pressure from Parramatta for the top spot. This game should be a cracker and one not to be missed with both sides looking for three points to press their claims.

Round Four Result: Bonnyrigg WE 5 (Bradley, Aschner pen, Tomasevic, Ghiso, Gomez) Leichhardt 0

### SQUADS

**TIGERS:** 1. Andrew Crews, 2. Kelvin Foster, 3. Joe Moric, 4. Ross Kethel, 5. Steven Livingstone, 6. Michael Galluzzo, 7. Joe Bruni, 8. James Stubbs-Mills, 9. Allan Picken, 10. Steve Karavatakis, 11. Sam La Rocca, 12. Jeremy Brown, 13. Andrew Falas, 15. Ryan Jones, 16. Anthony Tesoro, 17. Jason Lai, 20. John Paul Boutros, 23. Derek Poimer, **Coach:** Les De Celis

**WHITE EAGLES:** 1. Fernando Greco, 2. Sasha Utjesenovic, 4. Bobby Dragas, 5. Tayfun Devrimol, 6. Vuko Tomasevic, 7. Javier Mancino, 8. David Harding, 9. Shane Knight, 10. Christopher Bradley, 11. Johnny Ghiso, 13. Robert Gomez, 14. Leigh Gunn, 15. Peter Cklamovski, 16. Michael Hawrysiuk, 17. Jimmy Aschner, 18. John Kyriazopoulos, 20. David Aceski, 22. Rajko Mandic, 23. Devrim Huseyin, **Coach:** Greg Woodhouse

LEICHHARDT TIGERS are proudly sponsored by Continental Tyres and Western Suburbs Leagues Club



**Fairfield Bulls**

VS



**Bankstown City Lions**

**KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 16 February 2002**

**VENUE: Nineveh Field, 673 Smithfield Road, Edensor Park**

Fairfield enjoyed last weekend off with their clash against Bonnyrigg a victim of the wet weather.

The Bulls have lost just one of their past seven outings and the week off should do them the world of good to freshen some weary legs ahead of the Bankstown clash.

The Lions form of late has been excellent and they are now amongst a handful of chances fighting it out for a Top Five spot. Watch out for the Bulls new signing Nick Bosevski. He is one player who could really turn this game on its head.

Round Four Result: Bankstown City 1 (Luff) Fairfield Bulls 2 (Hoenselaars x2)

### SQUADS

**BULLS:** 1. Frank Mikuletic, 2. Adam Snyder, 3. Mathew Dihm, 4. Paul Bourke, 6. Paul Richardson, 7. Ray Younis, 8. Stewart Van Bentum, 9. Marc Hoenselaars, 10. Mathew Borg, 11. Richard Harrison, 12. Tom Maric, 14. Ismael Arrarte, 15. Nick Bosevski, 16. Andy Ravanello, 17. Craig Sharpley, 19. Jason Connolly, 20. Ali Akbal, **Coach:** Craig Sharpley

**LIONS:** 1. Zlatko Josevski, 2. Sefer Yildiz, 3. Richard Luksic, 4. Bryan Raeburn, 5. Anthony Kanaan, 6. Paul Wearne, 7. George Issa, 8. Robert Issa, 9. Goce Trposki, 10. Iain MacDonald, 11. Alex Trposki, 12. Adam Mammoliti, 13. Saso Boskovski, 14. Freddy Umlil, 15. Damien Luksic, 16. Colin Luff, 17. Steven Dimitrievski, 18. Dong-Ki Kim, 19. Robert Angievski, 20. Cem Akilli, 21. Darren Iocca, 22. Leo Carle, **Coach:** Ljube Jancev

FAIRFIELD BULLS are proudly sponsored by the Nineveh Sports & Community Club



# NSW Premier League



## FROM THE SIDELINES *with Greg Stock and Paul Goodwin*

Central Coast Coasties have not had much luck with the weather lately and have now been hit with more bad news. Long time Coasties identity, Ray Sandell, a highly respected former referee and referees' appointments officer has submitted his resignation from all positions he held as a member of the Coasties.

The club's Publicity Officer for some years now Ray was the ground announcer and programme editor for much of that time and also made many contributions to the soccer media through his match reports and numerous feature articles that appeared in countless publications.

From Leichhardt Tigers comes the news that contrary to earlier reports, Harry James has not signed with an overseas club and could be returning soon. Leichhardt are also very close to announcing a tie up with a major Italian club.

The under 19 team has arrived back from the Viareggio tournament where they acquitted themselves very well and in which 'keeper Murray Nelson and sweeper John Paul Boutros stood out.

With Joe Bruni and Tony Tesoro set to return from injury in the next week or so, Coach Les de Celis will have all players available for the first time since he took the helm two years ago.

**Belconnen Blue Devils** Defender Matthew Cachia popped the question on February 5th to his girlfriend Melissa Mann.

The date for the wedding is not yet set and the Blue Devils wish Melissa and Matthew all the best.



Penrith Panthers' young guns, Chad Taylor (bottom row, extreme left) and Jason Sciberras (bottom row, 2nd from extreme left) have both been approached by the Macarthur Rams to play winter football at Lynwood Park. Meantime, the Panthers club has been busy preparing for the upcoming Premier Youth League and have trial matches lined up throughout the month of February. Catch the Penrith lads in action this weekend against St George at Andrews Road Field on Saturday night. KICK-OFF AT 7PM!!

Life as a father is always trying. One as a football player and father is even harder as Blue Devils' goalkeeper and Captain Tony Giannasca found out recently.

Hearing his young daughter, Chloe, crying in the middle of the night Tony jumped out of bed and in doing so aggravated a hamstring injury, which became worse in the Round 13 clash against Bankstown City.

St George has switched their Round Nineteen clash with neighbours Sutherland to Jubilee Oval at Kogarah.

Well known as the former home ground of the St George-Illawarra Dragons in the NRL, the Saints are hoping the change of venue will assist the club reach out to some new fans in the

area.

The St George rugby league cheerleaders that were such a hit last season are back and set to make a few cameo appearances at Saints home games before the season is out. That is sure to put a few bums on seats-right boys!

Sutherland Coach Billy McColl is slowly getting his squad back to full strength after some injury concerns.

With Mitchell Blowes, Jamie Danaskos and David O'Han back in harness again the injury cloud has now moved over to experienced midfielder Colin McAusland who looks like being out for a few weeks with a hamstring problem.

Kire Josevski will also be missing for the next four weeks as he enjoys his honeymoon.

goals and conceding just 3.

Considering Canterbury had scored only 11 goals in their previous ten starts (including 5 against a ten man Blacktown side) the word 'entertainers' might soon be used to describe the new look Canterbury team!

Bankstown City to make the Top Five. That's the word from their striker Colin Luff.

The former Wolves and Sydney United forward is excited by the way his side has been performing in recent weeks, and is quietly confident his side can leapfrog into fifth.

"The confidence in the camp is high," said Luff, "and the team is really starting to gel." A 6-0 demolition of Belconnen has really brought Bankstown right into calculations but a tough run over the next three weeks could determine if they have the quality to take that next step.

"We have Fairfield and Leichhardt next and if we can take four points from

these games I have no doubts we can go on with the job."

Fairfield are another side fighting for a Top Five spot and have boosted their ranks with the signing of former Sydney United striker Nick Bosevski.

Premier League fans may also remember the former Australian Schoolboy international and Joey from his time with Bankstown City and Canterbury-Marrickville before he spent some time playing overseas.

"A fantastic acquisition," is how Coach Craig Sharpley has described Bosevski and Bulls fans are in for a real treat once he finds his feet.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles midfielder Javier Mancino came through his knee reconstruction operation successfully last week and will be out of the game for six months.



## Belconnen Blue Devils VS Sutherland Sharks



**KICK-OFF: 7.15pm & 4.00pm, Saturday 16 February 2002**  
**VENUE: West Belconnen SG, Hardwick Cres, Holt (ACT)**

The Blue Devils hard work to reach the Top Five is in real danger of being undone after the side posted just one point from their last two starts.

A 6-0 drubbing at the hands of Bankstown was followed by a score-

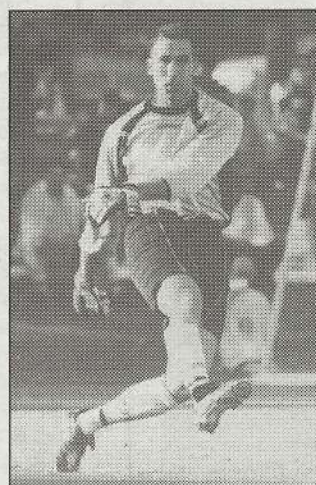
less draw with Blacktown City. Goalkeeper Tony Giannasca is an outside chance to start the game and his inclusion will boost the Belconnen ranks.

Sutherland was spanked 4-0 last weekend and continues to struggle. With just one win all season and a minor injury crisis in the camp it's hard to see the Sharks taking this game.

In between the under 19s clash

and the first grade will be a charity match for the "Friendship Cup Bush Fire Appeal" featuring a Soccer Canberra President's XI versus the Diplomatic Soccer Team. Members of the Blue Devils Committee are raring to play with Blue Devils President, Tony Paterson, expected to be between the sticks.

**Round Four Result: Sutherland 0 Belconnen Blue Devils 3** (Lyons, Katz, Zwangobani)



Belconnen goalkeeper Tony Giannasca is fighting to be fit for this weekend.

## SQUADS

**BLUE DEVILS:** 1. Anthony Giannasca, 2. Toplica Popovich, 3. Matthew Cachia, 4. Elliot Zwangobani, 5. Nic Purdue, 6. Shane Lyons, 8. Michael Katz, 9. John Rakic, 10. Daniel Macor, 11. David Arranz, 12. Jaime Mauro, 13. Stewart Camara, 14. Marko Perinovic, 15. Adrian Dowling, 16. Oscar Zamora, 17. Stephen Kemp, 18. David Milin, 19. Daniel Camara, 20. Rade Kosanovic, **Coach:** Lino Florese  
**SHARKS:** 1. Dennes Olla, 2. Peter Feehan, 3. Allen Stajcic, 4. David O'Han, 5. Ben Short, 6. Dean Heffernan, 7. Jamie Danaskos, 8. Monte Pfrengle, 9. Alex Pfrengle, 10. Steve Cklamovski, 11. Kris Karanasos, 12. Dean Spresian, 13. Ambrose Mancia, 14. Simon Miller, 15. Colin McAusland, 16. Kire Josevski, 17. Bill Petrovski, 20. Sam LaMacchia, 21. Mitchell Blowes, **Coach:** Billy McColl

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS are proudly sponsored by Belconnen Soccer Club, UhlSport, Mcguigan Wines, bestvalueIT.com, Pacific Painting, Sharp Direct

## NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

**PRODUCTION:** Emma Nwaneri, Elly Vea, Mary Quartly, Mark Stavroulakis  
**CO-ORDINATOR:** Binesh Mudaliar  
**WRITERS:** Greg Stock, Paul Goodwin, Claire Killeen, Lezette Isaac, Ray Sandell, Nick Guoth, Robbie Bartolillo, Gary Vandeburgt  
**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Carlos Furtado

★ All information is courtesy of the New South Wales Soccer Federation.

**NSWSF**  
**Valentine Sports Park**  
**235-257 Meurants Lane**  
**GLENWOOD NSW 2768**  
**Phone: (02) 9629 1800**



# NSW Premier League



## Central Coast Coasties 4 Sutherland Sharks 0

By Joe Spiteri

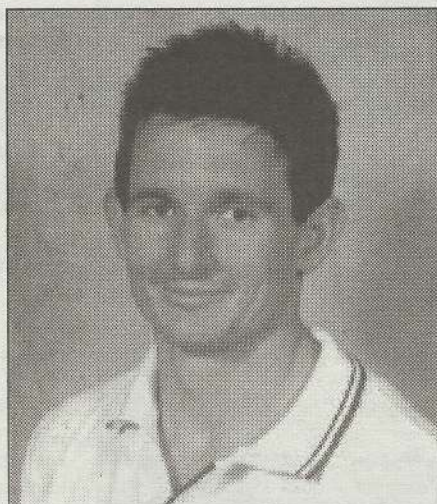
**A**t last the Coasties are back on track. The first half saw both 'keepers make some fine saves to keep the game scoreless at the break.

After the break the Coasties came out breathing fire. Within minutes Sutherland's keeper Dennes Olla had to pull off a fine save off a Mick Williams shot.

Two minutes later Mick Williams opened the score, heading in a pinpoint cross from Captain Andrew Clark. From then on it was all the Coasties. New recruit Gary Wilson scored a screamer from way outside the box.

Sutherland defended well and tried to get the Coasties off guard. Simon Miller found some space out wide but his shot went wide. But it was the Coasties night.

Peter Ritchie dispossessed a defender in the Sutherland 18-yard box and scored with a low drive. Sutherland continued to attack but the



Coasties Captain Andrew Clark sealed a memorable night for the Coasties by scoring the fourth and final goal.

Coasties defence held firm. In the dying minutes of the game Andrew Clark scored when he finished off a great build up from Karl Freeman and Peter Preston.

### Sutherland Sharks 0

Central Coast Coasties 4 (M Williams 57m G Wilson 63m P Ritchie 77m A Clark 87m)

**Coasties:** D. Moore, S. Matthews, M. Falzon (P. Preston 45) M. Daley, A. Peatey, M. Williams, K. Freeman, P. Leary (R. McKendrick 70), P. Ritchie, A. Clark, G. Wilson (S. Jones 77)

**Sutherland Sharks:** D. Olla, A. Stajic, B. Short, D. Heffernan, M. Pfrengle, K. Karanasos (M. Said 67), A. Mancina, S. Miller, K. Josevski, S. LaMacchia (C. Moffat 80)

**Cautions:** Nil

**Referee:** Vic Gaudi

**Assistant Referees:** Peter Gibbs & Gordon Selkirk

**4th Official:** Darren Sprod



Solid Sutherland defender David O'Han was sorely missed by the Sharks on the weekend.



## St George Saints 3 Leichhardt Tigers 2

By Paul Goodwin

**S**t George pulled off the big surprise on Friday night on a pitch that held up well despite a week of solid rain and a day of thunderstorms and hail.

They took the lead after weathering an early storm from a very attack-minded Tigers' formation when Bruno Beddoni ran onto a ball from Archie Markopoulos.

Markopoulos had initially played a free kick against the defensive wall and got the ball back again before lifting it over the same players and right in the path of the wily Beddoni, who needed no prompting.

Saints' keeper Stacy Alogdellis had saved a Derek Poimer volley in the 9th minute and Andrew Falas had also been denied by a brave smothering save from the home keeper, who had a superb match.

Falas and Poimer then either missed good chances or were denied by smart saves as the first half unfolded, but former Saint Steve Karavatakis put his Leichhardt side level in the 36th minute.

He benefited from a nice cut back from the byline by the persistent James Stubbs-Mills to tuck the ball away among a sea of legs.

Leichhardt appeared to have the upper hand after going ahead from another Karavatakis goal on 53 minutes.

He put away a lob from close range after being played in behind a flat footed St George defence and many home supporters would have feared the worst after this goal had gone in for the neighbouring top-three side.

St George showed commendable fight and courage to work their way back into the match and with the injection of substitute Jade Permall they lifted an extra notch.

In the 67th, a Markopoulos corner from the right found its way to a packed penalty area and Nick Bolianitis was able to tuck the ball away, as a defender on the line and the 'keeper both failed to get a touch on the ball as its power enabled it to sneak in at the near post.

Referee Kevin Humphreys, however, credited the goal to Markopoulos, the corner taker.

Markopoulos was wearing boots that earlier in the day had been repaired by former Saints' Assistant Coach Ian Gillan and had suggested at the time that he would score the winner with them and he certainly did that!

Five minutes after drawing level it came.

Nabil Codmani played Markopoulos away down the left and the blond Saint careered away to confront Andrew Crews and finished in great style into the roof of the net.

St George then weathered the storm, including a volley just wide from Stubbs-Mills and a Ryan Jones volley saved superbly by Alogdellis.

Not surprisingly visiting coach Les De Celis

took off straight after the game, but it was all smiles in the Saints' dressing room. The excited players were jubilant, especially two goal hero Archie Markopoulos and coach Manny Spanoudakis who admitted that the win had been one to savour.

"We cannot get too carried away with that; we have some tough games coming up, but it is good to get some breaks for once after so many frustrating performances lately," he explained.

Perhaps the real hero was goalkeeper Stacy Alogdellis who thwarted Leichhardt with some superb saves. Leichhardt know all about good goalkeepers. The previous week Penrith's Chad Taylor had stood between them and victory at Lambert Park.



The Saints owe their first win of the season largely to goalkeeper Stacy Alogdellis.

**Saints 3** (Beddoni 24m, Markopoulos 67/72m)

**Tigers 2** (Karavatakis 36/53m)

**ST GEORGE:** Stacy Alogdellis, Mark Bariamis, Angelo Petratos, Mladen Damjanovic (John Fotiadis 55), George Maglis, Bruno Beddoni, Achilles Markopoulos (Nick Bolianitis 62), Nabil Codmani, Simon Verrinder, Brad Campbell (Nick Bolianitis 46), Sal Zullo (Jade Permall 62)

**TIGERS:** Andrew Crews, Joe Moric, Ross Kethel, John Paul Boutros (Kelvin Foster 75), James Stubbs-Mills, Allan Picken, Andrew Falas (Ryan Jones 64), Steve Karavatakis, Sam La Rocca, Jeremy Brown, Derek Poimer

**Cautions:** Sam La Rocca 87 (LT), Angelo Petratos 65 (SG), Bruno Beddoni 90+ (SG)

**Sent off:** Joe Moric 90+ (LT)

**Referee:** Kevin Humphreys

**Assistants:** Andrew Kay and Terry Goodhew

**Fourth Official:** Brendan Skinner

## Bonnyrigg WE vs Fairfield Bulls: washed-out



The clash between local rivals Bonnyrigg White Eagles and Fairfield Bulls at the Serbian Centre (pictured) was washed out on the weekend. Bonnyrigg White Eagles Secretary, Jack Cirjanic, commented: "Because there has been so much rain recently, we haven't been able to cut the grass for one and a half weeks now. The grass has grown 8 inches in that time but due to the dampness of the grass, if we did mow on Saturday morning, the surface would have been ruined."



# NSW Premier League



## C'tbury-M'ville 3 Penrith Panthers 2

By Robbie Bartolillo

In a match embroiled in controversy, the Berries catapulted themselves into finals contention, beating the Panthers 3-2, at Henson Park on Friday night. Following Sydney's weeklong torrential rain bombardment, the playing surface surpassed all expectations, accommodating for a fast-paced, absorbing contest.

Determined to rid themselves of the dreaded draw specialists tag, the Panthers initially toiled with a three man strike force, with Osvaldo El Ali playing in behind speed twins, Daniel Hinton and Rod Hutchinson. Conversely, the Berries attacking movements revolved around lightning wingman Ali Salim, his penetrating qualities, a perfect condiment to the superior distributing games of Greg Collins and Anthony Doumanis.

But it would be via the direct route, in which the Berries opened the scoring in the 33rd minute. Andy



Penrith's Tim O'Connell has graduated to the Panthers first grade side after being developed by the youth system at Andrews Road Field and also Blacktown City Demons.

Amegashie was slick enough to latch onto a quickly taken free kick by libero Michael Kladis, delightfully chipping over an advancing Chad Taylor in the Panthers goal.

Five minutes later, proceeding a contentious no penalty decision, Berries Assistant Coach Spiro Hantzis and Panthers Coach Tony Rassmussen were both dismissed to the stands, their explosive outbursts sparking a highly intense and controversial period in the game. And just when it appeared the game would erupt into a foul frenzy Penrith equalised, restoring some much-needed credibility.

Again, the goal was simply orchestrated, Hinton's determined challenge on

Les Bihari, enabling the easiest of tap ins for attacking partner Hutchinson.

For both teams at half time the message was simple: eliminate overzealous aggression and stick to the game plan. It was the Panthers, spurred on by their deserved equaliser, who resumed in a settled fashion, their deft, one touch passing game paving the way for a second goal in the 57th minute. The Berries were caught napping by a quickly taken El Ali corner, his pass to Hutchinson expertly crossed for an unmarked Paul Marosevic, who completed the simplest of headed goals.

The Berries would need an ounce of brilliance, and it was witnessed in the 69th minute, when skilful livewire Yane Talcevski, ingeniously weaved through a wall of Panthers defenders, and unleashed with an unstoppable, swirling shot, leaving Taylor diving in vain. The goal was testament to the substitute's second half performance, and obviously inspired a frantic finale, in which both teams could've gained the ascendancy.

It was the Berries who did so, when right on the stroke of full time, goal-poaching Amegashie again reiterated the importance of simplicity, his alertness allowing him to head over an advancing Taylor.

Berries Coach Laki Konistis paid testament to his chargers resilience. "It was one where we got out of jail. They haven't got the third best defence for nothing. But our boys were just as superb, coming back from 2-1 down and scoring three goals."

**Canterbury Marrickville 3** (Amegashie 33/90, Talcevski 69) **Penrith Panthers 2** (Hutchinson 40, Marosevic 57)

**Berries:** Bihari, Collins, Manolopoulos, DAlessandro, Amegashie, Kotsopoulos, Pillemer (Talcevski 45), Markopolous, Salim (Papageorgiou 71), Kladis, Doumanis (Paradis 63)

**Panthers:** Taylor, Giometti, Gardiner, Marosevic (Sciberras 63), Hutchinson, El Ali, O'Connell, Hinton (O'Connell 54), Noble (Wells 83), McCaffery, Boyd  
**Cautions:** McCaffery 20, Marosevic 26, Manolopoulos 28, Talcevski 63

**Referee:** G. Leverton

**Asst. Ref:** K. Sharp, D. Adamopoulos

**4th official:** R. Kofler



## Bankstown City 2 Parramatta Eagles 2

By Greg Stock

Parramatta Eagles blew their chance to go to the outright lead on the Premier League competition table when they were held to a 2-2 draw against Bankstown City last Sunday night.

Dominating the first half to take a 2-0 lead at the break, the Eagles slipped back into second gear, allowing their opponents to dictate the second half, and ultimately share the points.

The Eagles burst out of the gates and raced to a 1-0 lead in the 10th minute when Daniel Kukucka beat the offside trap and advancing goalkeeper Zlatko Josevski when he met a Glenn Sprod cross. The score then moved to 2-0 in the 31st minute when Kukucka again was Johnny on the spot to put away a loose ball after Ben Delicata's shot was blocked by Josevski.

But after half time it was a different story. Lions' Coach Ljube Jancev was so concerned at his side's poor first half form that he made two substitutions in



Parramatta Eagles' defensive star Paul O'Grady.

the 40th minute introducing Darren Iocca and Steve Dimitrievski. In the 46th minute he had his reward, when Iocca met an Adam Mammoliti cross at the near post to beat Jason Holmes with the header.

The goal seemed to spark the Lions into action and then pressed hard for long periods of the second stanza. Nine minutes short of time they were back on level terms when Colin Luff got a toe to the ball during a goalmouth scramble, and with an ounce of luck they could have gone one further. In the dying stages of the match Robert Angievski sent a shot just over the bar after Freddy Umlil had whipped in a deep cross from the right hand touchline.

The scoreline didn't really help either side with the Eagles blowing their chance to go to top spot while the Lions could have leapfrogged Belconnen into fifth spot. But with goalkeeper Zlatko Josevski forced to play out the final fifteen minutes with an ankle problem, Bankstown can feel pleased with the result and live to fight another day.

**Bankstown City Lions 2** (Iocca 46 Luff 59)  
**Parramatta Eagles 2** (Kukucka 10 31)

**BANKSTOWN CITY:** Zlatko Josevski, Richard Luksic, Bryan Raeburn, Paul Wearne, Goce Trposki (Darren Iocca 40), Alex Trposki (Steve Dimitrievski 40), Adam Mammoliti (Leo Carle 65), Freddy Umlil, Damien Luksic, Colin Luff, Robert Angievski

**PARRAMATTA EAGLES:** Jason Holmes, Geoff Dwyer, Malcolm Meilak, Mirko Jurilj, Mark Reveley, Daniel Kukucka, Jim Bakis (Anthony Mondello 74), Glenn Sprod, Ben Delicata, Geoff Howarth, Daniel Cummins  
**Cautions:** Sprod (pe) 40 Bakis (pe) 51 R. Luksic (bc) 51 Iocca (bc) 59 Reveley (pe) 65 Cummins (pe) 69 Mondello (pe) 75

**Referee:** Alex Spiroski

**Assistant Referees:** Jim Nicolaou and Ernest Horvath

**Fourth Official:** Michael Johnson



## Blacktown City 0 Belconnen BD 0

By Paul Goodwin

Missed opportunities cost Blacktown City dearly in their transferred match on Saturday night at Jensen Park against Belconnen.

Struggling for form and confidence after a lean spell and some unexpected defeats, The Demons always looked capable of defeating the Canberra based side, but lacked any luck in front of goal and even against ten men at the finish and throwing everyone forward they could find no way past a stubborn and well organised visiting defence.

Goal-less, the game was not devoid of goalscoring opportunities and Blacktown's cause was not helped by a fine display of keeping by Michael McKenna who made his debut for the injured Tony Giannasca and made many brave and brilliant saves, especially in the first half.

McKenna raced off his line several times to thwart Blacktown raiders, perhaps his most significant piece of work coming only seconds before the

break when Luciano Berbis made a very fast break and looked set to go on and score. Good anticipa-

**Blacktown 0 Belconnen 0**

**BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS:** John Crawley, Ben Willard, Dane Hokin, Damien Foxe, Mike Smith, Luciano Berbis, Peter Sermann, Steve Riches (Paul Dee 75), David Reid (Jim Nikas 75), Naoki Imaya, Zlatko Donev

**BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS:** Michael McKenna, Toplica Popovich, Nic Purdue, Elliot Zwangobani, Stewart Camara, Shane Lyons (Jaime Mauro 45), David Arranz, Michael Katz, Adrian Dowling (Matthew Cachia 86), Daniel Macor, Daniel Camara  
**Caution:** Stewart Camara 55 (BBD)

**Sent Off:** Stewart Camara 82 (BBD) second caution

**Referee:** Nick Asargiotis

**Assistants:** Adrian Tamplin & Colin Smith

**Fourth Official:** Jim Barnes

tion and use of his legs, by the 'keeper, made sure Berbis didn't.

David Reid had also shot just wide after Steve Riches had nodded on a Berbis corner in the 30th minute in one of many dangerous Demons' moves.

Busy Zak Donev and livewire Naoki Imaya both tried hard for the Demons with Donev's closest effort in the first period when slicing wide a Ben Willard cross in the 8th minute.

Belconnen were active in the first half too, with Daniel Macor in the thick of things.

A 25th minute David Arranz free kick sailed invitingly across the face of the Demons' goal, but Daniel Camara, ghosting in was unable to connect.

Late in the game Blacktown really looked like snatching the win as first Donev and Berbis and then Imaya all went close.

Jim Nikas volleyed over from right in front in the 83rd and Imaya hit the woodwork, powerfully, moments later, but the last save from Belconnen was not McKenna's as Demons' new defender Dane Hokin, venturing forward, went around the suddenly exposed keeper only for a defender to come to the rescue with a late clearance in the goalmouth.

It was just not the Demons' day but full credit to the Blue Devils who showed good discipline and application and took a valuable point back to Canberra with them.

Blacktown Coach Brian Brown felt frustrated after the game and pointed out that having to make

Changes every week meant that the side was never really settled.

His opposite number, Lino Fiorese, said that his 'keeper might get a second chance next week after a sound display and he also was delighted with his side's overall performance, more than happy to collect the valuable point.



Naoki Imaya tried hard for the Demons but to no avail.



# NSW Premier League



## CLUB FOCUS

## Return of the Legends

**PARRAMATTA MELITA EAGLES V BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS**  
**5.15PM KICK-OFF, SUNDAY 17TH FEBRUARY**  
**MELITA STADIUM, EVERLEY ROAD, SOUTH GRANVILLE**

Two of Australia's proudest sporting clubs, Parramatta Melita Eagles and Blacktown City Demons re-live a snippet of their tradition this Sunday at Melita Stadium in the 'Return of the Legends' match.

Players who donned the famous jerseys of these two great football clubs in yesterday will once grace the turf to show the public that while age may have wearied their legs, the skills will never disappear.

The 'Return of the Legends' match this Sunday is a joint exercise between Blacktown City and Parramatta Eagles, in what is hoped by Demons' Football Manager, Ken Schembri as a forerunner to an annual event between these two grand old clubs. Mr. Schembri said, "The most valuable asset in the game is the players and both clubs thought that a Legends match is a way of keeping past players in touch with the game and also their former clubs."

"The organisers would like the 'Return of the Legends' match to be a regular annual event and depending on how the public accepts this Sunday's match, there's the possibility of similar matches involving other traditional clubs such as St George and Leichhardt."

Vince Balzan, President of the Parramatta Melita Eagles Soccer Club,

explains that the past players of Melita started the ball rolling from the red & white end.

"Our former players expressed interest in a get together where they could socialise and play a game at the same time. The boys will play golf on Saturday afternoon and go for dinner on Saturday night and then pull on the boots on Sunday!"

"It's a great promotional tool for our

game and the Eagles have even gone to the trouble of flying out Ray Farrugia from Malta who was with the club for ten years and represented Malta while playing in the NSL for us.

"I certainly hope that Sunday's match is the first of a long-running annual event."

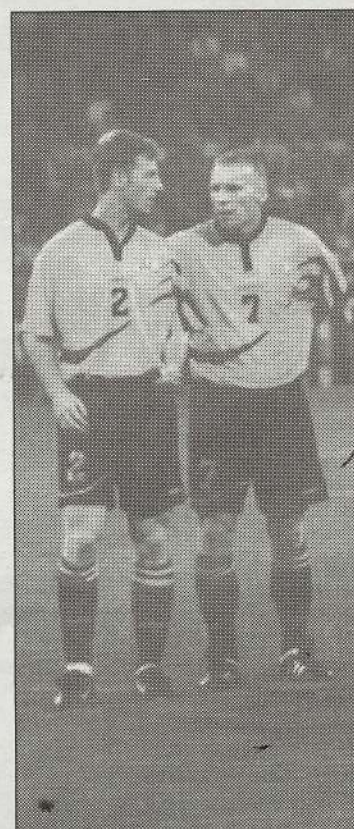
The list of players approached by both the Eagles and the Demons is a smorgasbord of history and talent.



The great Parramatta Melita Eagles side of 1981 most of whom will be playing this Sunday in the 'Return of the Legends'.

Former Eagles who have been invited to participate on Sunday include Ray Farrugia, Kenny Wilson, Don Allan, Richie Williams, Johnny McKie, Rob McGinn, Bobby McPherson, Terry Greedy, Johnny Stoddart, Greg McCoy, Wayne Farnsworth, Terry Jones, Brian Parker, Bobby Smith, Alex MacPherson, Phil Mikas, Steve McDonald, Alex Jamieson, Colin McAusland, Billy Griffiths, Richie Yamin, Mike Berry, Jay O'Rourke, Barry Walker, Micky Cross and Peter Hensman.

The past Demons players running around on Sunday will include Barry Hoare, Bruce James, Robbie Wheatley, Martin Bourke, Cliff Pointer, Paul Daley, Stuart Selvage, Peter Denyer, John Bradley, John Larkin, Randell Easthorpe, Mike McLaughlin, Steve Pollard, Mike Quarmby, Lawrie McKinna, Tony Rassmussen, Rod Skellern and Robbie Slater.



Two Blacktown City Legends, Craig Moore and Robbie Slater. Slater is having treatment in order to play this weekend.

## AN EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME - TIGERS ARRIVE HOME FROM VIAREGGIO TOURNAMENT 2002

By Lezette Isaac

As the Leichhardt Tigers entered the stadium for the opening ceremony of the prestigious Tourneo di Viareggio, they could not help but feel a sense of football exuberance.

To walk behind the Australian flag and hear the Aussie anthem is an experience that will forever be etched in the minds of the young Tigers.

As one of forty clubs, who had the privilege of being invited to what has been dubbed as the world club championship for under-20 youth teams, the Tigers would have been the envy of most youth teams in Australia.

It's not everyday you get to compete in such a prestigious tournament that has boasted names such as Batistuta and Del Piero. But for the young side it was just a matter of showcasing the success of the past two seasons to the rest of the world and to compete alongside some of the giants of world football.

The task of defeating the Europeans was going to be a hard one for the NSW Premier League Under 19 champions.

The players were exposed to a culture that lives and breathes the game of football, it's not a part of life it's a way of life.

The Tigers went to the tournament with one major goal-to be competitive with the teams and try to match them as much as possible.

Francesco Zarrella, Michael O'Riley Paul Nicolaou and Rockie Restuccia were among the best performers for the Tigers. But the standout was the Leichhardt Tigers Player of the Series John Paul Boutros.

Boutros was humble about the achievement. "I knew I was capable of it, it was just a matter of playing well against talented opposition. The European sides are tactically better than us, their run off plays are great and they play better positional football."

"Domestically we tend to focus more



John Paul Boutros

on fitness, so we were able to stick with our opposition for the duration of the match, as for speed and aerial technique we are basically the same," Boutros said.

For the players it was not only a matter of adjusting their games but also adjusting to referees who controlled the game in another language.

"At times it became very frustrating, we felt like on some calls we were hard done by and it was difficult to communicate with the ref. It was very weird!" Boutros stated.

The trip was also an excellent opportunity for the players to kick back and do some European sightseeing.

What better place to do it than in the middle of the magnificent and animated Viareggio Carnival.

The players soaked up the atmosphere, attending the carnival, hanging out in arcades and meeting players from the other contesting teams. Former Australian under 17s captain and Vicenza

player Mark Byrnes proved a handy tour guide for the Leichhardt boys.

"Mark Byrnes was with us every night, we chilled out, met some Inter Milan players and just enjoyed ourselves, and we were all well behaved and stuck to our 10.30pm curfew."

With scouts from Australia and abroad attending the tournament, performances like that of John Paul Boutros would have attracted some interest. "There were some scouts that showed some interest - two from Australia and one from overseas. They spoke to the coach but I think they were just enquiring really."

When asked if playing overseas would entice him, Boutros replied, "It's everybody's dream to play soccer overseas, it's why I play the game. The country is so soccer mad, the girls are just as crazy as the guys when it comes to football."

"The standard is phenomenal, the teams are more cunning and the spectators are crazy."



# NSW Premier League



## SCOREBOARD

ROUND 14

### PREMIER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

<b>ST GEORGE SAINTS</b> .....3 (Beddoni 24m, Markopoulos 67/72m)	<b>LEICHHARDT TIGERS</b> .....2 (Karavatakis 36/53m)
<b>C'BURY-M'VILLE</b> .....3 (Amegashie 33m/90m, Talceviski 69m)	<b>PENRITH PANTHERS</b> .....2 (Hutchinson 40m, Marosevic 57m)
<b>SUTHERLAND SHARKS</b> ..0	<b>CENTRAL COAST</b> .....4 (Williams 57m, Wilson 63m, Ritchie 77m, Clark 87m)
<b>BLACKTOWN CITY</b> .....0	<b>BELCONNEN BD</b> .....0
<b>BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS</b> 2 (Iocca 46m, Luff 81m)	<b>PARRAMATTA EAGLES</b> .....2 (Daniel Kukucka 10m/31m)

**BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES VS FAIRFIELD BULLS**  
(WASHED OUT AT THE SERBIAN CENTRE)

### UNDER 19

<b>C'BURY-M'VILLE</b> .....0	<b>PENRITH PANTHERS</b> .....2
<b>ST GEORGE SAINTS</b> .....0	<b>LEICHHARDT TIGERS</b> .....3
<b>BLACKTOWN CITY</b> .....1	<b>BELCONNEN BD</b> .....3
<b>SUTHERLAND SHARKS</b> ..0	<b>CENTRAL COAST</b> .....7
<b>BANKSTOWN CITY</b> .....2	<b>PARRAMATTA EAGLES</b> .....2

**BONNYRIGG WE VS FAIRFIELD BULLS WASHED OUT**

## TABLES

### FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	14	10	1	3	40	17	31
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	13	10	1	2	31	13	31
Leichhardt Tigers	14	7	4	3	26	23*	25
Fairfield Bulls	13	7	3	3	27	25	24
Belconnen Blue Devils	14	7	2	5	28	22	23
Bankstown City Lions	14	6	4	4	28	26	22
Blacktown City Demons	13	5	4	4	27	20	19
Canterbury Marrickville	14	5	3	6	20	24	18
Central Coast Coasties	13	3	3	7	13	23	12
Penrith Panthers	14	1	7	6	16	22	10
Sutherland Sharks	14	1	3	10	13	32	6
St George Saints	14	1	3	10	13	35	6

### UNDER 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Central Coast Coasties	13	10	1	2	39	8	31
Leichhardt Tigers	11	8	1	2	24	7	25
Blacktown City Demons	13	8	1	4	30	17	25
Parramatta Eagles	13	7	3	3	21	16	24
Belconnen Blue Devils	14	6	3	5	34	29	21
Fairfield Bulls	12	6	3	3	23	18	21
Penrith Panthers	13	4	4	5	18	17	16
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	13	5	1	7	20	27	16
Canterbury Marrickville	14	4	4	6	16	23	16
St George Saints	14	3	4	7	12	29	13
Bankstown City Lions	14	2	2	10	10	31	8
Sutherland Sharks	14	2	1	11	19	44	7

### TOP SCORERS

- 12 Jimmy Aschner (BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES)
- 12 Daniel Macor (BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS)
- 11 Jim Bakis (PARRAMATTA EAGLES)

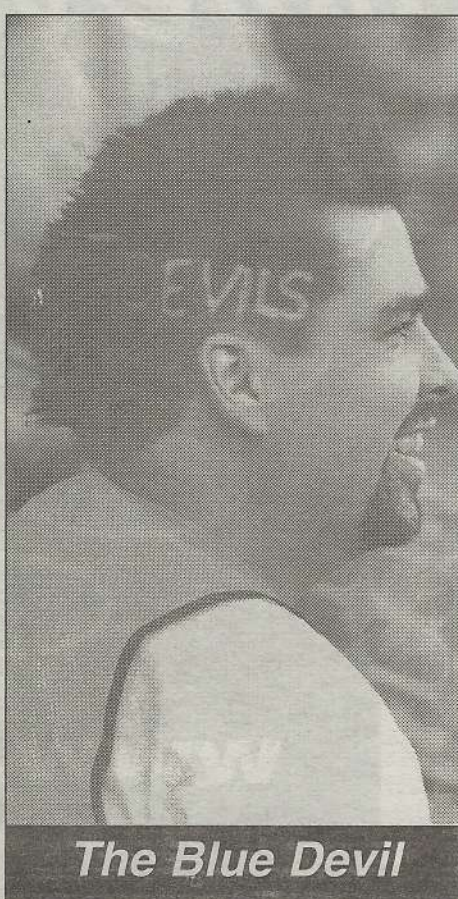
## Belconnen Blue Devils in Action



David Arranz



Shane Lyons



The Blue Devil



Elliot Zwangobani



# NSW Premier League



## The International Head of Coerver Coaching, Aime Jacquet, talks Football

By Alfred Galustian

**Aime Jacquet Profile:** Has been a Youth Instructor in Coaches Education programs in 29 countries including; at clubs Bayern Munich, Real Madrid, Arsenal, AC Milan. With Federations: French Football Federation, Brazilian Federations.

He is the International Head of Coerver Coaching

**Player:** St Etienne. (12 years) French Div 1

**Coach:** League: Lyon and Bordeaux (2 Championships)

**National:** France (World Cup Champions 98)

**Currently:** Technical Director FFF

**Alfred Galustian (AG):** What is your current role?

**Aime Jacquet (AJ):** My current role is as Technical Director of the FFF, a job that I followed Gerard Houllier in. My responsibilities focus on 4 main areas:

- Coaches Education
- Identification policy for selection of the best young players in the country
- The development of these players
- The development of women's soccer in France

**AG:** How is it you didn't go to a major

**European Club after you won the World Cup?**

**AJ:** I was approached by many of the big clubs, but I had already decided before the World Cup, that after it was over I wanted to go back to the development of the game in France. I have to tell you now that this will be my last year in my current job, and then I will go back to where I started- the grassroots, I want to give something back. Hopefully I can travel to different countries in this capacity with Adidas; here I hope to work with you again.

**AG:** Aime, how would you compare the current French team with the World Champions you coached in 1998?

**AJ:** 3/4's of the squad are the same players as I had, the main difference is that all the players have 4 more years experience. They have tremendous confidence, which is critical in football. Winning the European Championship since the World Cup has given them more confidence and experience so this makes them, in my opinion an even more formidable team than when we won the World Cup.

**AG:** You told me last night that your policy for the last World Cup was to select not only the best 20 players but the 20 best people, please explain what you

mean.

**AJ:** Yes it is important that they are great players first but this must be combined with good character and intelligence. Most great players possess these. In addition there must be a chemistry between the players.

**AG:** Who do you feel will be the top teams of World Cup 2002 and what are their main qualities?

**AJ:** Argentina is dangerous: they have

the most depth in their squad ... perhaps too many players to choose from. There are 3 or 4 players for each position ... all great quality. Brazil weren't happy about losing to us, especially 3-0 so they will be motivated. England, under a great Coach Eriksson, will be strong...but above all I think the most dangerous team for France is Spain. Historically we always have difficult games against them; they have a solid defence and players who can create goals out of nothing.

**AG:** What in your opinion are the best leagues in the world and why?

**AJ:** For me number one is Spain, spectacular players and atmosphere. Number two Italy: the best prepared players, totally professional in every way. Number Three England: passionate exciting soccer.

**AG:** Aime, you are a great believer and supporter of youth football what advice do you have to improve players in the future?

**AJ:** One important factor is good coaches education

...I would say in each age group you need different types of coaches with different skills and focus for example

**6 to 11 years old:** This is a time for fun, encouragement, learning basic ball skills

**12 to 15:** Mostly technical work, so it is an advantage to have a coach with good technical skills

**16-19:** Now you have specialization... physical trainers, tactical knowledge.

**AG:** Aime...I look forward to working with you in Japan this year: You are a wonderful ambassador for World Soccer, Thank you.



Aime Jacquet (left) chats with Alf Galustian. Jacquet is currently the Technical Director of the French Football Federation.

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GOL4 12/01

# Dubious trends cloud Oz Soccer future

By Bert van Bedaf

**T**he departure of young South Melbourne defender Patrick Kisorbo for trials with English Premier League club Leeds United is the latest in a long list of Australian players seeking a career overseas.

South's best first-year player last season and a Young Soccerroo, Kisorbo can potentially become one of the finest defenders in Europe and earn himself fame and fortune beyond the dreams of any player in the struggling national league.

"I know it's going to be difficult," Kisorbo admitted. "But if I want to make it to the next level, I'll have to enter into this sort of environment."

Former Soccerroos and Hall of Fame legend Alan Davidson agreed Kisorbo needed to the next step to further his career. As a soccer commentator on cable television, Davidson watched Kisorbo grow in maturity and stature last season.

"Last year was his first season in the NSL and he had a great season.

But he cannot improve here anymore. If he stays for another season, he can only go backwards. He needs a higher level of competition to test himself," Davidson said.

"There's no reason why any young

player with talent and potential shouldn't go overseas to follow his dreams," said Davidson, who himself played overseas in Europe and Asia.

The exodus, however, has been overwhelming lately, leaving the NSL bereft of any greatness. Also gone, for example, are Nick Carle, from Olympic Sharks to Troyes in France, and Paul Reid from Wollongong to Bolton in England, among a host of others.

There are now so many Australians playing overseas, it is a miracle there's still a modicum of soccer talent left in the national league. The Aussies Abroad list offers a telling example of how much of a talent drain Australian soccer has suffered in recent years - and Victoria is no different.

There's Mark Vuduka, Danny Tiatto, Kevin Muscat, Archie Thompson, Marco Bresciano, Vince Grella, Simon Colosimo, Michael Curcija, Daniel Allsopp and Joe Didulica, who at one time played for the Melbourne Knights, South Melbourne and defunct Carlton before moving on to top or lower leagues in England, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands.

A welcome sight is the return of Joe Di Iorio and Anthony Magnacca to Victorian Premier League side Bulleen Zebras after stints in

Germany and Norway. Another is former overseas defender Steve Horvat, who first signed for Carlton and then rejoined the Melbourne Knights, the club that gave him a national title in 1995.

The drop in local standards has been universally lamented. South Melbourne coach Eddie Krncevic considered the going particularly depressing. Following his side's 0-0 draw away with leader Perth Glory mid-January, the former Soccerroo, who played in Belgium as a top striker, described the standard as poor.

"This is not being disrespectful to the players we've got in the league.

We have a handful of good players, but the overall standard is poor to what it was a few years ago. I wouldn't pay to watch it," Krncevic said in Perth.

A dubious trend to beef up appeal is signing ageing overseas warhorses for guest stints. Sydney United signed former Croatian international Aljosa Asanovic for three matches. Krncevic wanted former Belgian international Stephane van der Heyden in the side, but the South board red-carded the idea and the Melbourne Knights failed to get former Manchester United captain Eric Cantona for a single match.

The biggest problem that will always remain is keeping players in Australia. The Professional Football Association maintains that will only happen when players are offered a realistic career path, full time professionalism at club level and decent wages. But clubs, such as South Melbourne, argue the wages explosion during the last few years is sending clubs broke.

There's a real danger that Australia is becoming a third-world type of soccer nation. Not only are talented players joining overseas clubs, overseas clubs are taking financial interests in Australian clubs in order to spot and trial talent first hand.

The Knights and South Melbourne have resisted allowing foreigners a financial stake, although both clubs have dabbled with the idea of entering into "sister relationships" with overseas clubs. The Knights initially sold Viduka to Croatian club Dynamo Zagreb before he moved on to Celtic Glasgow and then Leeds. The Knights rejected a buy-out offer from a Chinese consortium only recently. South forged a link with Greek club Olympiakos last May.

English giant Leeds United reportedly is interested in taking a major share in Sydney's Olympic Sharks, who offer a large junior basin for Leeds to pick and choose from. Leeds already has Viduka and Harry Kewell in its senior side and has three more young Australians playing in the reserves.



Patrick Kisorbo: Yet another Aussie star off to Leeds for trials.

Kisorbo is the latest young talent to trial with the English giant.

Another top English first division side Newcastle United is said to be interested in buying - into its Australian namesake Newcastle United, following in the footsteps of fellow clubs Manchester United, West Ham United and Southampton, who hold Australian interests in local

clubs and youth academies.

Probably, the most blatant example of foreign imperialism is the 100 per cent ownership of Northern Spirit by Scottish club Glasgow Rangers, a precedent that may well become a future trend - with dubious benefits in the end.



Danny Tiatto: Left the Melbourne Knights in search for greener pastures overseas.



Kevin Muscat: Currently playing his trade in England but could soon find himself at Ibrox.

# MISSED ITALIAN DATE LEAVES SOCCEROOS IDLE

Following the news last week from the Italian FA that the planned international friendly between Italy and Australia on 17 April 2002 would not be going ahead, it is now a certainty that the

Socceroos will likely not be involved in any game for the rest of the year.

A ray of hope offered by the Italians through their FA Secretary, advising that discussions should

commence for a future match will not materialise this year as the Italians will be wholly involved in the World Cup finals and after that, qualifying games for the 2004 European Championships.

"We are available and interested in planning at some future time a friendly match with your National Team," said Italian FA General Secretary Guglielmo Petrosino vaguely.

"I was disappointed to learn that the planned match against Italy in April would now not be proceeding, but was heartened by the Italian FA's interest and invitation to organise a future match with our Socceroos," said Knop.

"Like the many fans of the Socceroos in Australia, we all want this quality of match to go ahead and now we can re-commence discussions with the Italians as a priority to ensure that it happens.

"Soccer Australia is fully committed to finding the best international opponents for our National team and we will continue to work to secure those opportunities that are presented to us," concluded Knop.

Knop, whilst disappointed at the loss of the international was encouraged by the Italians immediate intention to play against Australia in future.



Italian National Team.



Branko Culina: Sydney United coach.

## Bravehearts blast SA over Marconi loss

Sydney United Club president, Mr. Marko Franovic last week, condemned the standard of refereeing during the Round 17 game between Marconi Stallions and Sydney United penultimate Saturday.

"It was an exhibition of disgraceful refereeing that brings the game of soccer in this country into disrepute.

We accept the four minutes of extra time that was displayed by the fourth official.

At the end of this legitimate extra time, we Sydney Utd won the game and we are entitled to the three points."

"The decision to play an additional three minutes (seven minutes of extra time in total) was an absolute disgrace. Where else would this happen in the world?

"I'm absolutely amazed. We've sent a "Please Explain" letter to Soccer Australia regarding the standard of refereeing at Saturday's game.

We have just been advised that Soccer Australia is presently investigating the incident.

"Soccer Australia say they want more people to come to the games. But why should people turn up especially

when they see a match decided by disgraceful refereeing?

The incident does nothing for the game, it incites unrest and cynicism amongst fans."

Mr Franovic also had some stinging words for the local media "Why are they being so quiet?

A few years ago we were charged by Soccer Australia for bringing the game into disrepute, the media couldn't kick

us hard enough. Recently they questioned our very survival.

Now an incident such as Saturday night's hardly rates a mention. You have to ask yourself where does the soccer media's loyalty lie - "with the big end of town or with the underdog?"

Mr Franovic says he and the board of Sydney United demand the three

points that were earned on the night and are willing to take strong action over the matter.

"The board and I are determined to see justice prevail. We will take whatever action is necessary including taking our cause to FIFA.

"The Sydney United board, the supporters and myself find Saturday's display of refereeing absolutely unacceptable and will not stop until we are

awarded the three points that are rightfully ours and ensure that, after his appalling display of refereeing, that

this particular referee never refers again.

## Stallions are ready to bolt

By Bert van Bedaf

VICTORIAN Premier League newcomer Whittlesea Stallions has raided the transfer market in a determined bid to have a major impact on the state's leading soccer competition this season.

In the side will be former Melbourne Knights heavyweights Mark Silic in central midfield, stopper and a former Knights captain Jason Vukadin, defensive midfielder Paul Magdic as well as Ivan Razov and striker Joe Tricarico. To top it off, the Stallions have also signed former South Melbourne forward Vas Kalogeracos from the Football Kingz.

Silic has returned from another stint in Germany, while Kalogeracos is a much-travelled striker. He's also played for Heidelberg and Perth Glory before joining South Melbourne and leaving after last season. He fell out with the New

Zealand club earlier in the NSL season and has been living in football limbo for some time in Melbourne.

The Stallions are taking a risk with Tricarico. The striker has been struggling with a serious hamstring injury since his days at former NSL club Carlton. He joined VPL side Altona Magic last season but was not a regular starter. He went to the Knights on a three-month contract but was released.

The Stallions are acutely conscious of the fact that the VPL is a lot tougher than the State League. They won promotion to the VPL last season, together with Fitzroy City.

Relegated Essendon Royals discovered how tough the VPL is last season, when they plunged back to the State League without winning a game. South Dandenong won seven matches, but also was relegated on 27 points.

The Stallions are on a mission. President Sam Cuteri came close to rescuing failed NSL club Carlton the

season before last and has great ambitions with the Stallions, aiming to turn them into a future national league club with perhaps its home ground Epping stadium as its top flight base.

"We still have a lot youth in the side and it's a question of how well we can blend the young players with the more experienced ones. We still have to be balanced as a unit," Stallions coach Phil Stubbins said, while agreeing the club has recruited exceptionally well.

"Silic is a good acquisition. He's a fantastic recruit for us. He's won (NSL) championships and he brings a lot of experience to the side," Stubbins said.

"The fact that we're in the premier league is good for the club. We'll see how we go, but we don't want to repeat the Essendon experience. Our 100 per cent aim is to stay in the league and survive our first season.

Anything above that will be a bonus for us," he said.



Harry Kewell: Concern grows at Leeds United over his decline in form.

# Kewell's poor form worries Leeds

**L**eeds United badly need the real Harry Kewell to stand up and sparkle again if their wavering season is not to become an expensive embarrassment.

Their failure to beat relegation-haunted Middlesbrough last Saturday means sixth-placed Leeds are eight points adrift of a Champions League

berth.

Leeds' 2-2 draw at the Riverside and the manner of their inability to make multi-million-pound talents count against one of the Premiership's journeymen teams underlined manager David O'Leary's growing frustration.

Skipper Rio Ferdinand admitted: 'Knowing you've got the quality is not the same

as producing it on the pitch. We've only ourselves to blame.'

Kewell's skills thrilled Europe two seasons ago. But a more typical pose these days is of a static Kewell with mitted hands on hips.

O'Leary said: 'Harry is not playing the way we know he can and I honestly don't know why.'

Dean Windass was given

far too much room to head Boro's late equaliser, while Boro skipper Paul Ince's first equaliser reared freakishly over Nigel Martyn's dive.

Yet Martyn's magnificent save from Noel Whelan's volley a minute before Windass struck meant some reward for Robbie Fowler's hard work, including a headed goal to follow Eirik Bakke's opener.

## Melbourne in the Doldrums



By Bert van Bedaf

## Opposition eats Humble Pie

By Bert van Bedaf

**V**ictory over his opponents was so complete that the opposition to George Vasilopoulos as president of South Melbourne crumbled almost immediately.

Days after being re-elected with an overwhelming majority, Vasilopoulos could only savor the moment watching his detractors eat humble pie.

New South spokesman and a trenchant opponent of Vasilopoulos for 18 months, Phil Diamataris kneeled in the sand and pledged his support for the South president. The fact that Vasilopoulos is likely to step down at the end of the season also might have some-

thing to do with it.

Nevertheless, Diamataris came out saying, "It is time to acknowledge him and put our support behind him."

After months of trying to undermine Vasilopoulos's leadership and launching break-away group New South against him at least year's board election, Diamataris watched Vasilopoulos face his detractors with the bold proposition of "put up or shut up" at the recent annual general meeting and gain a smashing victory.

Diamataris is now prepared to shut up. "This club is on shaky grounds, but that was never our intention. We'll be going back to our supporters and telling them it is best if the club survives," he said.

**T**HERE is such a depressed market for national league soccer in Melbourne, it cannot not go down much further. Both the Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne are carrying million dollar debts and are barely surviving.

Crowds are at their lowest ebb.

The Melbourne game is so much in the doldrums that Soccer Australia chairman Ian Knop recently suggested the city's remaining two clubs should be reduced to one.

How that would be achieved was not explained. Should they merge? Should one die? It seems hardly conceivable that after the demise of Carlton, Collingwood (and Morwell's Eastern Pride) in the last five years another Melbourne club should wither.

Such is the gloom and despair that the unthinkable has been contemplated, notwithstanding Knop's assertion that "Melbourne

is an important soccer market for us and I want to see the game develop in this city to the potential that can be achieved".

The argument from the top is Melbourne should be reduced to one club to drum up enough support to make the sport prosper and to play at Colonial stadium. The suggestion also is the league should not be reduced from 13 to 12 next season but possibly down to ten and Melbourne should again be part of the culling.

A case in point is the lack of attendances at Melbourne matches.

Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne aren't attracting home crowds bigger than around 3,500. In contrast, Perth Glory, a one-town team, pulls crowds of 13,000 to 14,000 at home matches and

Knop has used the figures to strengthen the argument.

Reducing Melbourne to one NSL side, or the league to ten teams, has not gone down well with Victorian Soccer Federation chairman Manny Galanos.

"The national (league) constitution calls for 12 clubs. To change that Soccer Australia would need 75 per cent support from the stakeholders."

Without Victoria's approval it simply would not happen and we wouldn't back a change like that," Galanos said.

And as far as a Melbourne reduction goes, Galanos is definitely not going to back the national body. "We would demand Melbourne would have at least two NSL clubs and perhaps three. One club is a non-story from our

point of view," he said.

But sometimes, it seems the clubs themselves are about to throw in the towel.

Having failed to snare Frenchman Eric Cantona as a guest player, the Melbourne Knights abandoned any thoughts of staging their second derby with South Melbourne at Colonial stadium. Without a drawcard in the first half of the season, the derby drew 10,396 spectators at the 50,000-capacity stadium. It was embarrassing and an indictment of Melbourne's support.

"The crowd was very disappointing. We get a crowd of 80,000 coming to the MCG for a Socceros international. Where were all those (Melbourne) soccer fans for a local derby," Knights captain-coach Andrew Marth asked at the time.

A repeat with a similar paltry attendance was simply not viable at a venue like Colonial, and the Knights decided to stage the game at their own stadium in Sunshine.

The magnitude of the malaise is seeping into the psyche of backers and presidents.

Knights chairman Harry Mrksa, a travel company millionaire and long-time financial backer of the Somers St club, has contemplated pulling out. "For the first time, I have been thinking that I should quit. If I can't lead the club out of trouble, then what am I here for?" he asked.

At South Melbourne general manager Damien Phillips recently resigned and its president George Vasilopoulos is likely to retire at the end of the season.

"Whether the club can survive that's the grim picture at the moment."

It's very tough and I fear for the future of the game," Phillips said.

"We have to spread the good word otherwise we won't have any (NSL) clubs (in Melbourne) the way we are going," Vasilopoulos said.

"What then? Are we going back to the (Victorian) premier league and play in front of 300 people? We're down to two (NSL) clubs in Victoria and they need support. The Knights need support. We (South) need the support," he said.

It's up to Melbourne's soccer public to decide whether the game can survive or dies.



Eric Cantona: Shunned an offer to appear for Melbourne Knights.

## Cavaliers aim for Finals

By Bert van Bedaf

**F**ormer champion Green Gully missed out on the top-five finals in the Victorian Premier League last season and are poised to make amends this season.

Green Gully finally signed Port Melbourne player Nick Tsaltas. The striker's transfer from the Sharks was settled at a Victorian Soccer Federation tribunal hearing last week.

Much is expected from last season's top scorer. Tsaltas and Ice Kutlesovski will be charged with most of the scoring for Green Gully. The Cavaliers lacked striking power last season, which

brought them undone.

The Cavaliers also snared Melbourne Knights player Dragi Nastevski and gained Mijo Trupkovic from St Albans Saints as well as Dean Fak from former NSL club Eastern Pride.

Several regulars have left the Cavaliers. Sonny Seven went to Coburg in the State league. Steve Camilleri decided to try his luck with Altona Magic. Stravko Atanasovski retired. Steve Martin has joined NSL side Parramatta Power, while Daniel Debevc has gone to the Melbourne Knights.

Green Gully president Charles Farrugia said the Cavaliers were aiming for a top five position with a top three place as the preferred

spot, since it offered the double chance in the finals.

"Because of NSL clubs like Canberra Cosmos and Eastern Pride folding, there have been more good players around and several premier league clubs have recruited well," Farrugia said.

"I believe Heidelberg (titleholder), Bulleen and Port Melbourne will vie for the top three places. It will be a real challenge for us. We want to be in the top five, but it will be a hard job for us to make the top three," he said.

St Albans Saints contracted former Croatian international player Zlatko Vego as its new coach and signed Jovanovic Novacevski from Macedonian club FC Pelister.

# 'Collapse of ACT League imminent'

By Graham Cooke

One of ACT soccer's most outspoken figures was at it again last week.

Steve Bryant, who recently lashed Soccer Australia's decision to increase registration fees as a means of easing their debt burden, turned his attention closer to home, saying a lack of ambition among some of the smaller clubs in the area would lead to the death of the ACT Premiership.

The former Canberra City National Soccer League defender said that he would rejoin the club, now playing in the ACT State League's first division, as coach and looked forward to the day when they would once again perform at the top level.

"At least Canberra City have a vision and want to play at the highest level possible," he said. "One of the big problems in



Anthony Giannasca: Heading for Olympic All Stars.

the ACT is that year after year you get teams winning the State League, who refuse to be promoted to the Premier League.

"So we have had teams drop out of the premiership, and it has gone from 10 to nine and now eight clubs, because no-one is willing to be a replacement."

He cited the example of the Olympic All Stars, who had joined State League One packed with aging, but still potent talent. "I've heard reports that Tony Giannasca, Jason Dunn, the Mazis brothers, Robbie Perinovic, Andrew Young, George Kulcsar and Baz Giampaolo are all going to play," he said.

"They would be a big chance to win the competition, but they will not go up because Olympic already have a team in the premiership.

"I'm not knocking the All Stars for entering. It's not against the rules and good luck to them. I am critical of Soccer Canberra for not ensuring there is compul-

sory promotion and relegation between at least the top two divisions.

"If people want to play social football, then let them play it in divisions four, five and six."

Bryant was brought to Australia by Canberra City when they were in the NSL in the early 1980s, then rejoined them as player coach a decade later. The club got into financial difficulties and he was heavily involved in the eventually unsuccessful effort to restore their fortunes. After City dropped out of the premiership and soccer generally for a short period, he had spells in charge of Burns Club and, most recently Monaro.

He said City were now attempting a comeback through the State League. "I am stepping down by joining them, but they assure me their finances are now in order and at least they have ambition, and that seems in short supply in ACT soccer at the moment."

## SOCCER CANBERRA JUNIORS

By Graham Cooke

Soccer Canberra have named next weekend and the weekend after for junior registrations, with organiser Steven McIntyre remaining hopeful that the 10,000 barrier will be smashed this year.

"We have hovered around 9500 for the last couple of years but we do have teams from Goulburn this time, so that may push us over the line," he said.

However, it remained to be seen whether the controversial Soccer Australia levy on all players, including juniors, would have an impact on registrations. McIntyre and Soccer Canberra had led an aggressive campaign to win more converts to soccer, refusing to be daunted by the loss of a flagship NSL club, and the failure of the Socceroos to make the World Cup finals.

Nominations for this year's Kanga Cup international junior tournament were beginning to come in. "We expect 200 teams from throughout Australia and the world," he said.

# Wollongong News

By Otto Bader

**Wolves** — triumphant Youth Grade coach Eddie Tesoro praises his young squad of 16 to 17 to 18 to 20 years old soccer stars, now in second spot on the table, just two points behind leaders Parramatta Power.

The team has done well, exceeding all expectations. The next upcoming opponents Canberra Institute of Sports and Academy of Sports will be crucial and must be won to consolidate second place. Tesoro's squad is made up with the majority from local Illawarra Junior soccer clubs, only two boys are Sydney based.

A talented Towradgi lad — 16 years old goalkeeper Justin Pasfield is at present pruned as future NSL keeper under head coach Ron Corry's guidance. A brilliant squad of 15 players, well disciplined with top attitude, is coached by Eddie Tesoro three nights a week with the aid of several presently playing first grade teenagers available for selection if note called upon by the head coach.

On Sunday — the weekend-bye for the Wolves — a visit to Nowra has been organised for two games — Youth Grade and First Grade against local club Shoalhaven City in aid of the Bush Fire Appeal. All proceedings will be donated to the brave organisations fighting the recent fires. With proper promotion a crowd of over 2000 is expected.

In April during School Holidays, a soccer training camp over 3 days also in Nowra is planned, contact Wolves office Eddie Tesoro on phone 02 42 26 39 88 for details. First Graders from the Wolves will attend all three days to coach eager youngsters in the finer art of soccer. Hopefully plenty of juniors from the local clubs come along and meet the NSL stars.

**Teenagers Invited to First Grade** — Daniel Aliffi, Liam Austin and Ned Aleksic from the Youth pool have been invited to train with the Wolves First Grade squad. Senior coach Ron Corry is sooner to

later to give them a chance.

Eddie Tesoro is convinced Liam Austin could be the future star striker for the Wolves, he had a lay-off due to injury in the recent weeks.

The present Youth Grade squad will only lose three players next season due to age restrictions, the rest stays on and the coach is confident to develop an even stronger team. Four teenagers are travelling at present with Ron Corry's squad — Naum Sekulovski, Greg Sharland, Dustin Wells and Harvey Rodriguez, more are close to be called upon. This preference on youth spells a possible threat to regular seniors if they drop off form an performance or may decide to move on.

**Illawarra Annual General Meeting** — of the Illawarra Soccer Association attended by delegates of the 28 member clubs plus life members junior soccer representatives, Amateur Soccer Association and neutral observers, held on Sunday 3rd February resulted in the election of six directors as per agenda, automatically appointed since only six nominations had been received.

Notices of Motions carried relating in a change of starting times as stipulated Rule @ regulations, now Reserve Grade kicks off 11.45am, Youth Grade 1.30pm and First Grade 3pm.

Further Alterations carried concerning Registration of Players — now reading "all players who started their senior soccer at an Illawarra Soccer Association Club shall not be subject to Rules 30.3 — 30.4 and 30.5 (restrictions) and not restricted from returning and registering with said "Home ISA Club".

**Emilio Gigliotti** — made Life Member. Acknowledging his involvement with soccer in general and the ISA since 1990 as Board Member, Emilio was nominated for Life Membership, bestowed on him by the members.

Emilio came to Australia as a 14 year old lad, played junior soccer with Coniston and as senior with Hellas (now Wollongong Olympic)



Naum Sekulovski: Invited to train along with the Wolves.

before going to Port Kembla which he assisted in starting up and 1966 as player, committee member and in 1984 as coach together with Charly Dimenko.

In 1990 he resigned from the club and joined the Board of The Illawarra Soccer Association, quietly serving year for year as a Director. At this year's AGM Emilio was honoured with life membership of the Association.

**Alan Walton** — confirmed as President at the First Board Meeting after the AGM, re-elected for another term. Also confirmed were Paul Mahanidis as Vice President, Dough Tarrant as Treasurer, Otto Bader as Publicity Officer as well as several sub committee positions filled by directors.

**Sponsors of Soccer** — the Illawarra Soccer Association acknowledges proudly Major Business Sponsors the Illawarra Credit Union, the Fraternity Club and the Corrimall Leagues Club, all supporting soccer for many years.

**Youth Grade K.O.** — on the initiative of the Fernhill Soccer Club this year a \$1000.- midweek youth grade knock-out sponsored by the Corrimall Leagues club will kick-off Wednesday 13th, followed with

games on Friday 15th and the next two weeks.

Groups were drawn with Group A) Port Kembla (black), Picton Rangers, Cringila, Woononga — Group B) West Illawarra, Port (white), Tarrawanna, Balgownie — Group C) Bulli, Lysaght (white), Dapto, Fernill — Group D) Coniston, Shoalhaven City, Shellharbour City, Lysaght (blue).

All 16 teams will have at least three games with the group winners and runners-up going further. The group games are scheduled 2 x 20 minutes halves, 4 points for a win, 2 points for a score-draw, 1 point for a scoreless draw.

**Corrimall Leagues Club Knock-Out** — going since 1962 — now in its 40th year — includes first grade teams of the 28 member clubs plus guests from Aborigines soccer sides and Amateur teams.

Four fields are being used — Fernhill Towradgi Park, Bellambi Elizabeth Park — Tarrawanna Oval and Corrimall memorial Park, kick-off Sunday 10th February, 16 players with unlimited interchange are allowed to be used by the coaches. Each team is guaranteed three matches with 2 x 35 minutes halves, semi-finals 40 minutes 3rd and 4th place 45 minutes each way.

**Junior Soccer** — registrations for the 2002 soccer seasons are accepted on weekends now at individual soccer grounds. Age groups from U/6 to U/9 register for Roo-Ball and U/10's to U/18's for competitions proper. Girls are welcome to play in the U/12's to U/16's age groups. For further information please contact the Administration Officer on 42 83 57 77 during normal office hours. Over 8000 soccer players are expected to join this year.

Team nominations need to be handed in to the Junior Soccer Association by Friday 8th March, the Committee will then decide on various age group divisions.

**Rumours** — concerning an Australian Levy to bail out Soccer Australia were discussed at a recent General Associations Meeting with the NSL Amateur Soccer Federation. An amount of \$4.30 was proposed but not voted on.

Further discussion are required. The Illawarra Junior Soccer Association has considered any extra amount to be taken out of funds for this year, if a Levy is imposed. A final resolution will also affect the local Senior Soccer Association. With registrations of players accepted already it is impossible to charge an additional levy without proper advice and budgets prepared for this year.

**Soccer fields in Illawarra** — continues — to feature some of the really picturesque field improvement over the period of a year or so — Wetherall Park, Primbee — the home of Port Kembla Soccer Club, named after former Alderman Ray Wetherall — a patron of the soccer club — Premier League champions 2001, 200, 1999, 1996 and 1995, successful coach Adrian "Noddy" Alston now in his 10th season with Port.

A testimonial dinner in his honour is arranged for Saturday 25th

May at The 'FRAT'.

Invited guest represent the elite of Australian soccer.

President Emilio Salucci reports new signings of Shane McKirr, Matt Borg, Andrew Ravello, Alan McLeish (goalkeeper) — left Port have Aaron O'Brien, Matt Callaghan and Brett Kinmont. Appointed coaching staff besides of head coach Adrian Alston are Assistant coach George Allacon and for Youth Grade Geoff Costello.

Additional seating and floodlights are under construction with a grand stand planned on the western side of the ground. Port is aiming for another top soccer year.

Albert Bulter Memorial Park — home of Kemblawarra Soccer Club, a newly build venue, sponsored by the Kemblawarra Portuguese Sports @ Social Club, excellent facilities, 300 seat covered grand stand, floodlights and plenty of parking available.

Success in 2001 was First Grade second place in Premier League, Reserves 10th and Youth Grade 10th, head coach John Fleming going into his third term and is well known as a former NSL star.

He certainly will strengthen his squad to make a challenge this year.

**Sir Ian McLennan Spark** — Kembla Grange, home of First Division club South Coast United, placed last year First Grade 5th, Reserves 6th, Youth Grade 11th — newly appointed head coach Brian Butkovic may have a tough job on hand to rebuild a successful team.

The club has a top facility with a huge Grandstand, great floodlights, training field, good change rooms. In the past the soccer club played in Premier League — were champions 1987 and grand final winners same year, also champions 1989 — lately falling on hard times. Time will tell whether the club can regroup to former glory.

# Leichhardt Tigers In Viareggio, Italy



The Opening Ceremony of the Viareggio Tournament 2002.



The Leichhardt Tigers' squad at the Ceremony alongside Lazio's squad.



The Pope's towering Float at the Viareggio Carnevale on parade.



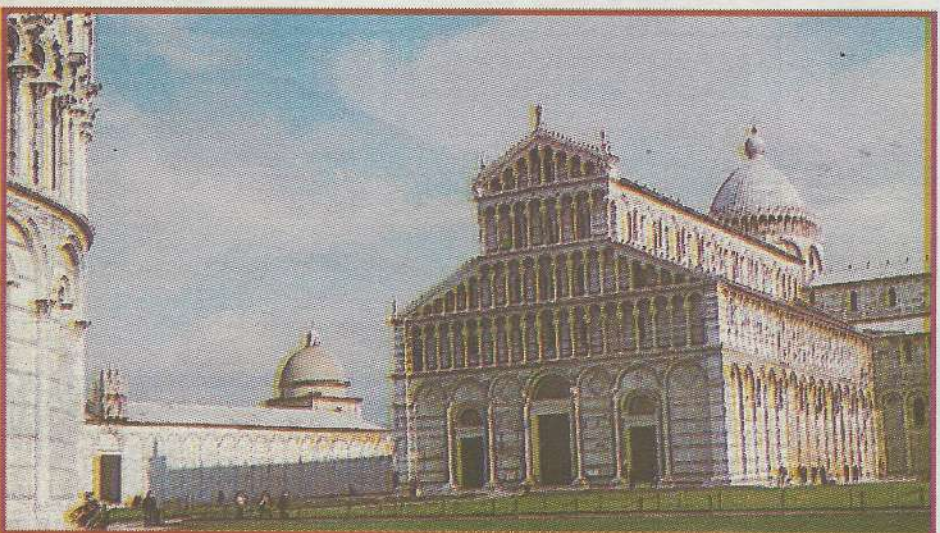
The satirical USA Float depicting George W. Bush surrounded by Negro slaves.



The colourful CARRIBEAN Float surrounded with Latin American dancers.



A Float depicting Rio at the Viareggio Carnevale.



A shot from Pisa the historic little township showing from left to right: The Baptistery, Santa Maria Cathedral, plus far right, the World Famous and incredible cylindrical stone structure of the Leaning Tower.



THREE Leichhardt Tigers' touring players seen here in Italy with their friend and Australia's former Under 17s captain, Mark Byrnes in light track-suit who now plays with Vicenza. From left: Nathan Foti, Paul Nicolaou, Byrnes and Joe Ciano a former school-mate of Mark's.

## Fergie makes u-turn over retirement

**M**anchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson told his players last week that he will remain as manager after the end of this season.

Ferguson made the announcement on the training ground, according to defender Mikael Silvestre. "It was a good surprise. We didn't expect to know who was coming in before the end of the season," said the France international.

"Now we know and it was announced by the coaching staff this morning after training.

He isn't staying to relax himself.

"He (Ferguson) said: 'It won't be a secret anymore so I have to tell you that I'm staying on as manager'."

The club have only confirmed so far that they are in talks with Sir Alex Ferguson about renewing his contract as manager. The Old Trafford boss was due to retire at the end of the season.

But Ferguson has made a huge U-turn and now looks certain to extend his 15-year reign at the club.

Silvestre said that Ferguson had not revealed how long his new contract would be.

"I don't know how long he's going to stay on, one year more, two years more or whatever, but it's good that I'll continue to work with him," Silvestre said.

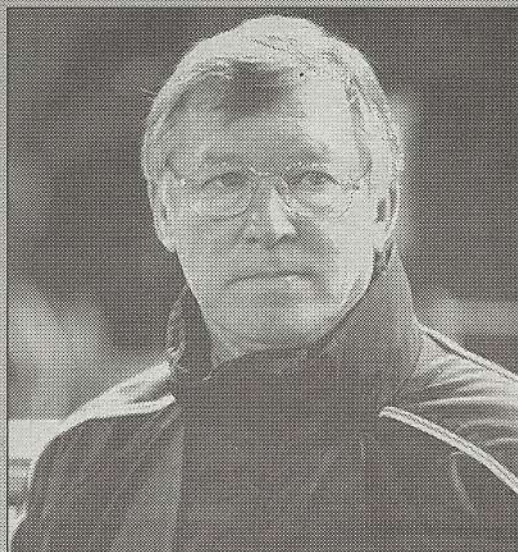
"He isn't staying to relax himself. This season was supposed to be his last season, but now it's not so.

"Every season under him we're going to play for everything."

United issued a statement to the Stock Exchange confirming that the club is in talks with the 60-year-old.

"The board of Manchester United PLC confirms that it was recently approached by Sir Alex Ferguson on Sir Alex remaining as manager of the club beyond this season," the club said in a statement.

"The board has entered into discussions with Sir Alex and his advisors on a new contract.



Alex Ferguson

"These discussions are continuing and a further announcement will be made in due course."

Manchester United chief executive Peter Kenyon began the search for Ferguson's successor at the start of the year.

Kenyon repeatedly stated that he wanted Sir Alex to remain as United's manager.

Leading names Ottmar Hitzfeld, Fabio Capello and Sven-Goran Eriksson headed the list of possible long-term replacements for Ferguson.

Most of the leading candidates are under contract until the end of the 2002/03 season and the search for a successor has now been suspended.

## RONALDO FOR MORE TREATMENT

**I**nter Milan's Brazilian star Ronaldo Luiz Nazario de Lima arrived in Rio de Janeiro to undergo special treatment to recover from his left thigh injury he suffered during a regular training, reported EFE.

Meanwhile, the 25-year-old striker declined to speak on the matter with the press, while his spokesman Rodrigo Paiva said: Ronaldo would

participate in training this week in addition to the physical therapy.

Paiva commented on the upcoming world famous Carnaval that precedes Ash Wednesday.

"There is nothing planned for the Carnaval. This will be a time of a lot of work and practice. The most that could happen is that he (Ronaldo) attends some parade or samba school," said the spokesman.



Ronaldo

## I'LL BE BACK AT LIVERPOOL - HOULLIER

**L**iverpool manager Gerard Houllier has insisted he will return as manager in "a matter of weeks" and dismissed claims he would return to the Premiership club in a different role.

The Frenchman, who has been recovering from major heart surgery since October, has had to contend with constant speculation that he is finished as manager of the Anfield club.

But at an awards ceremony where he collected a trophy as Merseyside sports

personality of the year last week, Houllier said: "There are those who say maybe I should forget about football. Maybe I should forget about breathing!

"It is just a matter of weeks before I get the all-clear. As Arnold Schwarzenegger said: 'I'll be back.'"

Houllier then refuted claims he would return to Liverpool in another role as manager.

"I have read those who say maybe I will be back in a different role," he added.

"As a manager I want to win the cham-

pionship. I say to Liverpool fans, don't always believe what you read.

"I am already back. I will be back again as manager in four or five weeks' time."

The Frenchman insisted that his driving ambition was still to lead Liverpool to further glory.

Of the five trophies the club won last year, he said: "These trophies are the past.

"They are part of our history. We look to the future, we have a bold vision for Liverpool Football Club.



George Weah (right), Liberia's player-coach not impressed with the recent disbandment of the national side.

## AXE FALLS ON LIBERIAN SQUAD

**T**he Liberian FA last week dissolved the national football team in an attempt to go "back to the drawing board" and rebuild following a poor showing at Mali 2002.

FA President Edwin Snowe told BBC that the squad has disbanded and will in future be based on promising youngsters.

Snowe said the dissolution would not last for long, but that with Liberia out of the Nations Cup and George Weah retiring, it was the optimum time to "step back and regroup."

"There are players with us who have been two years without a club," he pointed out.

He said that instead, the future of Liberia would be based around players from the country's Under-20 and Under-17 teams, in a way akin to Mali and Ghana, two of the teams who have been very successful at the Nations Cup.

"We will cope with this reality," he affirmed.

But he acknowledged that there was still one stumbling block to his masterplan.

"For some reason we are not selling this to George

(Weah) very well," he mused.

Weah appeared on radio in Liberia saying that the disbanding would damage Liberia.

"Except for Captain Nagbe, Debbah and I who have had at

least twelve to fifteen years on the Lone Star, the rest of the team are young and need to be maintained and supported adequately," he stressed.

## COACHING JOB AWAITS BAGGIO

**B**rescia president Luigi Corioni offered Roberto Baggio a coaching position at the club last week, then insisted the striker would play again despite his reported retirement.

"Roberto is a great man," said Corioni. "I think he will go on."

Brescia were shocked when Baggio's agent Vittorio Petrone announced on Monday that the player had decided to quit after knee surgery effectively ended any hopes of him playing in the World Cup.

But Corioni is convinced Baggio will stay at the club in some capacity - and that he will be back on the pitch.

"He is a great professional and I am sure he will get through this crisis with great dignity and great determination. I believe he will go on playing," he said.

"Baggio was in the best shape of his career. He was fantastic - no-one in the world could play like him."

Corioni confirmed that Baggio had been offered a coaching job when he first agreed a deal with Brescia and emphasised that, even if he does quit football, he will not be leaving.

"He will stay with us as a member of the management team," said the president. "This is an agreement we reached when he decided to come to Brescia, but I repeat, I think Baggio will play again."

## MONEY ROW SPLITS NIGERIAN SQUAD

**A** new row over money emerged in the Nigerian squad as the Super Eagles prepared to take on Senegal in the African Nations Cup last week.

Nigeria's players are understood to have threatened to boycott training in protest at the Nigeria Football Association's failure to reimburse them for their airfares to Mali.

"These officials are taking us for a ride again," one player told AFP. "They have offered to pay us 1,000 dollars each as a ticket refund when we should have been getting 2,500 dollars."

Another player added: "We have told them what they are offering us is not acceptable and that for the time being they should keep away from the team because they have proved again they cannot be trusted."

Later, NFA secretary general Taiwo Ogunjobi played down the rift, saying the players would be paid the due money before they left Mali to return to clubs in Europe.

"It is not a problem. The players have been paid all their entitlements while as concerns their ticket refund, it will be sorted out after the tournament as they are not leaving for their clubs today," Ogunjobi said.

The official said all players had been paid daily allowances while each were paid five thousand dollars as bonus for the quarter-final victory over arch-rivals Ghana at the weekend.

In January, the Super Eagles refused to travel to Egypt for a pre-Nations Cup friendly because they were yet to be paid donations from state governments and companies after qualifying for the 2002 World Cup in July.

## Brazil under pressure over Romario

**R**OMARIO is at the centre of another controversy after Brazilian coach Luis Felipe Scolari again overlooked him for two pre-World Cup friendlies.

Although the busy European calendar forced him to draw overwhelmingly from home-based players for the matches against Bolivia and Saudi Arabia, Scolari is still angry at Romario for missing the Copa America last year and left him out.

Instead, Scolari gave caps to six new players in last week's 6-0 home victory over Bolivia and the 1-0 away win at Saudi Arabia.

The decision to leave the Vasco da Gama striker out of the friendlies prompted protests in Brazil, where the former Barcelona star is not only revered as a loveable rogue but also looked up to as the one truly world-class player in the Brazilian league.

Supporters who watched the training sessions before the Bolivia game made such vociferous protests about his absence that the other players asked Scolari to order them from the terraces. Scolari was later reported to police after allegedly kicking a fan who confronted him.

Scolari was relieved to see his experimental team hammer a woeful Bolivian 6-0, though that relief was tempered by the lack of imagination his new charges showed against the Saudis.

Although the twin triumphs appeared to vindicate his decision not to select Romario, it was not all good news for the hard-nosed coach.

The four strikers who played a part in the two games - his first-choice partnership for both matches was Corinthians striker Luizao and Cruzeiro wide man Edilson - mustered only one goal between them.

With Ronaldo struggling to prove his fitness after the best part of two years on the sidelines, Romario is, even at 36, the only active Brazilian striker who has proved he can score goals at the highest level. He scored 74 goals in 2000, more than 60 last year and has already bagged five in four games this season.

If he keeps up that form, Scolari may have to swallow his pride and recall the man affectionately known as Shorty.

"Scolari's argument that he is leaving him out for tactical reasons is not convincing," Pele said in a newspaper column. "Romario is still a player who commands respect. I think Shorty should be in the squad that goes to the World Cup."



Romario: Pele wants him in the World Cup.

## Argentina recalls Cannigia

**G**lasgow Rangers striker Claudio Cannigia has been recalled to the Argentina squad by coach Marcelo Bielsa.

Caniggia, 35, has not been involved in the international set-up since 1996, but has won a chance to impress in this Wednesday's friendly against Wales in Cardiff.

The former Boca Juniors and Benfica star, who has scored 16 times in 48 games for his country, made World Cup appearances in 1990 and 1994 and is desperate to feature in Japan and South Korea this summer.

Caniggia has impressed in Scotland, firstly with Dundee last season and now with Rangers, following a £850,000 move in the summer.

Established strikers Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo are not included in the squad for a match Bielsa will use to assess fringe players.

There is experience though, with Juan Sebastian Veron and Matias Almeyda named in the midfield.



Claudio Cannigia

## Stam, Guardiola banned worldwide

**S**panish midfielder Pep Guardiola and Dutch defender Jaap Stam had their bans from Italian soccer extended worldwide by FIFA last week.

Lazio's Stam and Brescia's Guardiola were banned last month by the Italian FA for four and five months

respectively after testing positive for nandrolone.

The worldwide bans, like the domestic bans they rubber-stamp, are backdated to start from November 22.

Guardiola, whose ban threatens his chances of making the Spanish World Cup squad, has said he has scientific

proof of his innocence and will appeal against the ban, although he said he was relieved not to have been banned for a year.

The midfielder, who left Barcelona last season, played in Spain's 1-0 friendly win over Mexico in November.

## Cameroon retain African crown

**C**ameroon have retained their African Nations Cup title in a pulsating encounter with Senegal which ended in a penalty shoot-out after extra-time.

The match went to penalties after the two sides were deadlocked at 0-0 after 120 minutes of end-to-end football. Despite the lack of goals it was the highly-skilled affair that many had hoped for of the final, with both sides having their share of chances.

In the end it was the Senegalese captain Aliou Cisse who had to bear the brunt of the defeat as his missed penalty sent the trophy back to Cameroon for the fourth time.

Not since Ghana in 1965 had any team successfully defended their title.

Cameroon were in the end the most deserving of the victory but it was Senegal who started the stronger.

Goal disallowed

Henri Camara almost put them ahead after just four minutes, picking up an El Hadj Diouf pass in the box but with only the keeper to beat, sent his

shot over the bar.

It was the first of a number of chances for the Lions who were the better of the two sides for most of the first spell.

Cameroon though ended the half strongly, with Patrick Mboma's replacement Pius Ndiefi, going close. Samuel Eto'o Fils found the back of the net with two minutes of the half remaining only to have the goal disallowed for a foul on the Senegalese goalkeeper Tony Sylva.

Senegal's defence continued to struggle with the pace of Eto'o and Ndiefi in the second spell. However the Sedan striker missed two easy chances for his team which would have concluded the tie.

The first came mid-way through the second half as he ran round his marker but with only the keeper to beat, slammed his shot into the left hand post.

Then seven minutes into extra-time, with an easy header on the far post, his finishing deserted him again.

It was no surprise when the striker was brought off soon after.

The remainder of extra-time was a scrappy affair as the frustration of both sides began to show.

Sylva kept his side in it with seconds remaining, coming off his line to block Eto'o Fils' shot.

Both sides looked depleted as the whistle signalled the match would be decided on penalties.

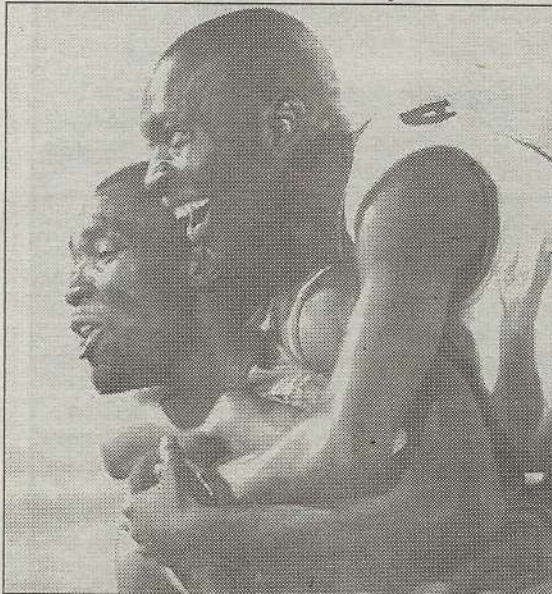
And the tension showed early on as Sylva dived to his right to save Pierre Wome's spot-kick and give Senegal the advantage.

Boukar got his hands on Ferdinand Coly's effort but poured it into his own net.

Patrick Suffo, Khalilou Fadiga, and Lauren Meyer all made no mistake, before Boukar levelled it for Cameroon, stopping Moustapha Faye's effort.

Geremi Njitap put the Indomitable Lions ahead for the first time and as Diouf missed Senegal's hearts sank.

Sylva saved Rigobert Song's effort, but it proved futile as Cisse missed his and crumbled to the ground in tears, sparking a riot of Cameroon celebration.



Cameroon's Etame Mayer Lauriano and Nicolas Alnoudji, (right,) celebrate their win against Senegal at the Africa Cup of Nations.

## RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

One of the saddest pieces of news that has emerged during the week is that we may have seen the last of Roberto Baggio.

Like so many players before him, such as Gigi Riva, Marco van Basten and Pierluigi Casiraghi to name but a few, their careers have been cut short due to injury.

Baggio, as mentioned in this column several times, is arguably the greatest player to have ever played for Italy.

The 'divine ponytail', as he was labelled in his career, was undoubtedly the leading player for Italy in three World Cups: 1990, 94 and 98.

Who could ever forget his goal at Italia 90 against Czechoslovakia as they were then called? Furthermore, the game against Nigeria at USA 94 with Italy behind by 0-1 and only two minutes left and his equaliser to bring the game into extra-time and then his winning penalty in that same game?

Make no mistake about it, at USA 94, Italy reached the final against Brazil because of the heroics of Baggio during the tournament.

A knee injury in an Italian Cup game recently against Parma recently looks to have ended one of the great careers in football. His dream of a fourth World Cup will not eventuate now. 55 appearances for Italy will not be expanded upon.

In a lot of ways it solves a big headache for coach Giovanni Trapattoni. It seemed that Trapattoni was not going to pick him anyway but the public pressure to do so would have been enormous. It will also please players such as Alessandro Del Piero and Francesco Totti to know that the Baggio-factor will not be hanging over them. In other words, their positions in the team are secure.

Brescia, the club he is still under contract to, has reportedly offered him a position in administration. However, it all remains to be seen what he chooses to do next.

Baggio, according to reports, will miss at least three and a half months and the reports are somewhat conflicting; some say that he has called it quits, while others have said that he will take a wait-and-see approach.

He turns 35 in a few days and the decision will not be easy. Whatever the former Fiorentina, Juventus, AC Milan, Bologna, Inter and Brescia star decides to do, one can only wish him all the best.

♦♦♦♦

It appears, according to a leading English tabloid, that our very own Harry Kewell could be on his way to Inter. The deal is believed to be a swap deal whereby Kewell goes from Leeds to Inter and Sierra Leone striker, Mohammed Kallon, goes the other way with a nice sum of money also flowing from Inter to Leeds.

Kewell is an excellent playmaker or striker and would truly be a success in Italy. Against Uruguay recently for Australia and every week in the English Premier League, Kewell constantly performs at an exceptional level.

The main difference of course between Italy and England is the amount of space that is conceded to attacking players. Italian football is regarded as technically the best defensive league to play in. It is the true test of the skills of an attacking player to succeed in Italy.

For a player such as Kewell it would be the pinnacle of his career to play at Inter alongside players such as Ronaldo and Christian Vieri. To have never played in Italy, for a player with Kewell's talent, would be such a shame. As a professional footballer, having conquered the English Premier League, all that remains to be done is prove his worth in Italy and Kewell is certainly up to the challenge.

♦♦♦♦

One could have laughed, if it wasn't so sad, at the latest blunder by Soccer Australia. The proposed game against Italy in Italy on April 17 will not take place and instead the Azzurri will now play Uruguay.

How could our national governing body get things so wrong again? At a senior level Italy has never played Australia and despite the politeness of the Italian Federation (FIGC), in saying that the game may take place at some future date, it would appear that this dream game is as far off as ever.

A letter accidentally sent out by Soccer Australia to the FIGC apparently gave the FIGC some breathing space and a new opponent was arranged.

The Socceroos, at full strength, are a worthy opponent of any national team but blunders such as this by Soccer Australia only helps to convince the local public that our governing body cannot get a thing right.

Furthermore, despite any good on-field results by our national teams, the farcical decisions that emanate from SA's headquarters only goes to prove, to other governing bodies around the world, that Australian soccer is really at the amateur stage in terms of administration. Sad, very sad indeed.



Juventus' Marco Tarchinardi (right) tackles Roma's Fernando Lima.

**ATALANTA 0**  
**BRESCIA 0**

One of Serie A's most heated derbies ended in a goalless draw as Brescia manager Carlo Mazzone was given a hostile greeting by Atalanta fans who remembered his provocative run towards them earlier in the season.

There were few scoring opportunities, but Atalanta's Brazilian Inacio Pia' came closest when his effort was ruled out for offside just after the break.

**BOLOGNA 2**  
**INTER MILAN 1**

Bologna went ahead in the 56th minute through a near post header from unmarked Fabio Pecchia. Former Inter goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca pulled off a stunning save to keep out a powerful Alvaro Recoba free kick moments later.

Lamberto Zauli doubled Bologna's advantage with a fine left-foot drive after a jinking run on 75 minutes.

Inter substitute Clarence Seedorf pulled one goal back a minute from time but it was too late to launch a revival.

**LECCE 1**  
**VERONA 1**

Lecce took the lead after just four minutes when Uruguayan Guillermo Giacomazzi nodded in Chevanton's corner.

The home side continued to pile on the pressure and Verona goalkeeper Fabrizio Ferron was forced to make a splendid save from Gheorghe Popescu's header midway through the first half.

But it was Verona who drew

level at the start of the second half when Mario Frick met Paolo Cannavaro's long pass before drilling home a shot from just inside the box.

**AC MILAN 1**  
**PERUGIA 1**

Struggling AC Milan suffered another setback as they were unable to beat nine-man Perugia at the San Siro.

Milan took the lead through a Serginho penalty in the 18th minute but could not translate their dominance into goals and were punished two minutes into the second half when Fabio Bazzani was left unmarked to nod in the equaliser from close range.

Davide Baiocco was sent off for a second bookable offence in the 60th minute and Sean Sogliano was dismissed two minutes from time.

**PARMA 1**  
**LAZIO 0**

After Johan Micoud had forced a fine save out of Lazio goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi, Parma broke the deadlock when former Lazio youth player Marco Di Vaio fired home on 67 minutes after a neat build-up involving Frenchman Micoud and Hakan Sukur.

Lazio's Italy defender Paolo Negro was stretchered off with a knee injury that could keep him sidelined for up to three weeks.

**AS ROMA 0**  
**JUVENTUS 0**

Juventus had their backs to the wall after defender Mark Iuliano was sent off four minutes before the break for a second bookable offence following a foul on Cafu.

Gabriel Batistuta forced two good saves from Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon. The striker could have won the game when Marco Delvecchio set up a close-range chance, but defender Gianluca Pessotto came from nowhere to make a goal-saving block.

**TORINO 1**  
**PIACENZA 1**

Piacenza took the lead when winger Vincenzo Sommese provided a perfect pass for Dario Hubner to drill home his 15th goal of the season in the 73rd minute.

Just as the visitors were pushing for another to make the points safe, a Torino free kick was deflected into the path of Marco Ferrante who turned it in from close range to equalise eight minutes from time.

**VENEZIA 2**  
**FIorentina 0**

Bottom club Venezia took the lead after 17 minutes as forward Filippo Maniero was left unmarked at a corner and set up Uruguayan Federico Magallanes who converted from close range.

Second-from-bottom Fiorentina fought back but Venezia's Italy under-21 international goalkeeper Generoso Rossi was up to the task, brilliantly saving a Nuno Gomes shot and Brazilian Adriano's rocket from the edge of the box.

Venezia made it 2-0 when Magallanes returned the favour with a precise cross for Maniero's 13th goal of the season early in the second half.

**CHIEVO VERONA 1**  
**UDINESE 2**

Udinese's Danish defender Per Kroldrup, making only his second appearance in Italy's top flight, turned in a thundering David Pizarro free kick after 17 minutes to put his side ahead.

Six minutes later, veteran forward Roberto Muzzi beat the off-side trap before curling in his 12th goal of the season.

The second half saw Chievo create numerous chances but Luigi Del Neri's side managed only a Federico Cossato consolation goal one minute from time.

### This Week (February 17)

Brescia vs AS Roma  
Juventus vs Fiorentina  
Lazio vs Chievo  
AC Milan vs Atalanta  
Parma vs Torino  
Perugia vs Lecce  
Piacenza vs Venezia  
Udinese vs Bologna  
Verona vs Inter Milan

Roma 0 Juventus 0, Atalanta 0 Brescia 0, Bologna 2 Inter 1, Lecce 1 Verona 1, Milan 1 Perugia 1, Parma 1 Lazio 0, Torino 1 Piacenza 1, Venezia 2 Fiorentina 0, Chievo 1 Udinese 2

	P	W	L	D	PTS
AS Roma	22	12	1	9	45
Juventus	22	12	2	8	44
Inter Milan	22	12	3	7	43
Chievo	22	11	7	4	37
Bologna	22	10	7	5	35
AC Milan	22	8	4	10	34
Verona	22	9	8	5	32
Lazio	22	7	7	8	29
Udinese	22	8	9	5	29
Torino	22	7	8	7	28
Parma	22	7	9	6	27
Perugia	22	7	9	6	27
Atalanta	22	7	10	5	26
Piacenza	22	6	10	6	24
Brescia	22	5	9	8	23
Lecce	22	4	10	8	20
Fiorentina	22	4	13	5	17
Venezia	22	3	13	6	15



Roy Keane of Manchester United is tackled by Scott Parker during the FA Barclaycard Premiership match between Charlton Athletic and Manchester United.

## EVERTON ARSENAL

0  
1

Arsenal maintained their remarkable unbeaten away run with a scrappy win at Everton, whose second successive home defeat left them yet again on the fringe of the relegation zone.

Injury-hit Arsenal never got going against a battling Everton side but won it with just about their only shot on target – a mis-hit volley by Sylvain Wiltord that looped over goalkeeper Steven Simonsen in the 61st minute.

## MIDDLESBROUGH LEEDS UTD

2  
2

Leeds have now taken just two points from a possible 15 as their title challenge has gone totally off the rails.

Eirik Bakke, returning after a six-week absence, put them ahead on 19 minutes after good work by Mark Viduka and Robbie Fowler.

Benito Carbone, on his debut, missed Boro's best first-half chance when he shot over the bar, but they got a freak equaliser in the 51st minute when Paul Ince's tame shot caught a divot and flew over the shoulder of a startled Nigel Martyn.

Leeds restored their lead almost immediately when Robbie Fowler flicked in an Ian Harte free kick from point-blank range.

A brilliant save by Nigel Martyn kept out a stinging late Noel Whelan volley, but from the resulting corner Dean Windass headed the equaliser two minutes from time.

## CHARLTON A. MAN. UTD

0  
2

Two goals from Ole Gunnar Solskjaer proved decisive for United, who were not at their best against a hard-working Charlton side.

Solskjaer broke the deadlock in

the 32nd minute, controlling a long ball from Roy Keane out wide on the left before cutting in and firing past Dean Kiely.

Charlton had a Graham Stuart goal ruled out for offside before Solskjaer sealed the points 16 minutes from time, hooking in cleverly after Kiely could only parry a shot from Ryan Giggs.

## ASTON VILLA CHELSEA

1  
1

Graham Taylor's second spell as Aston Villa manager got off to a good start when Paul Merson slid them ahead after 28 minutes, but Chelsea produced a much better second-half performance to take a deserved point.

Gianfranco Zola came on in the second-half and his first touch set up Frank Lampard for the equaliser on 65 minutes.

## BOLTON WAND. WEST HAM U.

1  
0

Bolton claimed their first home win since August as West Ham's terrible away form continued.

The goal came seven minutes before the break when a long throw by new signing Stig Tofte caused chaos and Ricardo Gardner cashed in.

West Ham were much improved in the second half but couldn't find a way through.

## DERBY COUNTY SUNDERLAND

0  
1

This match looked every inch the relegation battle it was with chances few and far between but it was Sunderland who emerged winners for just the third time in 13 league games.

Luciano Zavagno hit the bar for Derby in the second half, while Claudio Reyna had a goal disallowed for Sunderland before Niall

Quinn settled it from close range 10 minutes from time.

## FULHAM BLACKBURN ROV.

2  
0

Blackburn hit the woodwork twice but still slipped to another defeat and dropped into the relegation zone for the first time this season.

Andy Cole struck a post and Henning Berg the bar early on for Blackburn, but it was Fulham who went ahead when Barry Hayles took advantage of hesitant defending to score on 31 minutes.

A quick Fulham break ended with Steed Malbranque getting the second in the 63rd minute and it got only worse for Blackburn as Craig Short was sent off in the last minute.

## IPSWICH TOWN LIVERPOOL

0  
6

Liverpool turned on the style with a terrific performance that brought them right back into the championship battle.

Abel Xavier was on target after 15 minutes of his Liverpool debut and Emile Heskey made it 2-0 two minutes before halftime.

Sami Hyypia soared to thunder in a header from a corner early in the second half, Owen grabbed two in 10 minutes before Heskey capped a great individual display with the sixth in injury time.

## NEWCASTLE UTD SOUTHAMPTON

3  
1

Newcastle made it nine wins in 10 at St James' Park with another impressive show.

Laurent Robert opened the scoring when he lashed in a free kick from 30 metres and Alan Shearer headed the second from a corner after half an hour.

Saints have performed well against the leading clubs in recent weeks and pulled one back in the 39th minute through Marian Pahars only for Shearer to bang in a penalty in first-half injury time.

Bellamy and Shearer both hit the post early in the second half, but Newcastle couldn't find a fourth.

## TOTTENHAM LEICESTER

2  
1

Tottenham looked to be cruising to their first league win since January 1 until a late Leicester fightback had the home side hanging on desperately.

Darren Anderton volleyed Spurs ahead after 37 minutes and crossed for Simon Davies to tap in the second on the hour mark.

Steffen Iversen hit the bar with a great chip as Spurs seemed in total charge, but Stefan Oakes pulled one back with a free kick 11 minutes from time and Leicester could have snatched a point but for great goalkeeping by Neil Sullivan.

## THIS WEEK

(Tuesday, February 23)

Arsenal vs Fulham  
West Ham vs Middlesbrough  
Blackburn vs Ipswich  
Chelsea vs Tottenham  
Leeds vs Charlton  
Leicester vs Derby  
Liverpool vs Everton  
Manchester United vs Aston Villa  
Southampton vs Bolton  
Sunderland vs Newcastle

## PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	L	D	PTS
Manchester Utd	27	17	7	3	54
Liverpool	27	15	5	7	52
Newcastle Utd	26	16	6	4	52
Arsenal	26	14	3	9	51
Chelsea	26	11	4	11	44
Leeds United	26	11	5	10	43
Aston Villa	26	9	6	11	38
Tottenham	26	10	11	5	35
Fulham	25	8	6	11	35
Charlton Athletic	26	8	9	9	33
Sunderland	26	8	11	7	31
West Ham	26	8	11	7	31
Ipswich Town	26	8	12	6	30
Southampton	26	9	14	3	30
Everton	26	7	12	7	28
Middlesbrough	25	7	11	7	28
Bolton Wanderers	26	6	10	10	28
Blackburn Rovers	26	6	13	7	25
Derby County	26	6	16	4	22
Leicester City	26	3	15	8	17

## FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Manchester City	32	20	4	8	74	42	64
Wolverhampton	32	18	7	7	50	28	61
West Brom Albion	33	18	6	9	38	23	60
Millwall	33	16	9	8	54	35	57
Burnley	31	16	7	8	53	44	55
Coventry City	33	16	5	12	46	33	53
Crystal Palace	33	17	2	14	58	47	53
Norwich City	33	16	5	12	44	42	53
Preston	33	13	11	9	52	44	50
Birmingham City	31	13	8	10	45	36	47
Gillingham	33	13	8	12	49	46	47
Watford	32	12	8	12	47	38	44
Wimbledon	31	11	10	10	47	42	43
Nott'ham Forest	33	10	13	10	36	31	43
Sheffield Utd	33	10	13	10	37	40	43
Portsmouth	32	11	7	14	50	55	40
Bradford City	31	11	6	14	53	57	39
Barnsley	33	8	13	12	48	60	37
Rotherham Utd	32	8	11	13	39	50	35
Crewe Alexandra	30	9	8	13	30	48	35
Sheffield Wed.	33	8	10	15	36	53	34
Walsall	33	8	7	18	36	55	31
Grimsby Town	33	6	10	17	26	54	28
Stockport County	33	2	8	23	31	76	14

## SECOND DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Reading	32	20	5	7	50	26	65
Brighton	31	16	10	5	42	32	58
Stoke City	33	16	9	8	50	32	57
Bristol City	32	16	7	9	50	34	55
Huddersfield	32	15	10	7	47	33	55
Brentford	31	15	7	9	54	33	52
Oldham	32	14	10	8	57	40	52
Cardiff City	31	13	11	7	47	34	50
QPR	33	13	10	10	45	37	49
Tranmere Rovers	30	13	8	9	48	37	47
Wycombe Wanderers	30	12	10	8	44	37	46
Port Vale	32	12	7	13	40	44	43
Colchester Utd	33	12	7	14	50	55	43
Swindon Town	33	11	9	13	36	45	42
Chesterfield	30	10	9	11	40	39	39
Wigan Athletic	32	9	11	12	42	40	38
Blackpool	31	9	11	11	39	50	38
Peterborough Utd	31	10	7	14	43	42	37
Bournemouth	32	8	9	15	39	50	33
Bury	32	8	8	16	30	51	32
Wrexham	33	8	7	18	40	68	31
Northampton Town	31	8	4	19	34	55	28
Notts County	32	6	8	18	36	57	26
Cambridge Utd	31	5	8	18	29	61	23

## Spanish Primera Liga

Five goals from Fernando Morientes in Real Madrid's 7-0 thrashing of Las Palmas on Sunday sent the champions back to the top of the Spanish first division and emphatically ended a streak of four league games without a win.

However, it's tight at the top. Valencia could only draw 0-0 with Celta Vigo on Saturday but they only trail Madrid on goal difference, both clubs having 43 points from 25 games.

Celta are third, two points adrift of the leading pair, while Deportivo La Coruna are fourth, also on 41 points.

Las Palmas had never won a league game in Madrid in 30 visits and never looked like making their own bit of history against Real, who become the first team in the top flight of Spanish football for more than a year to put seven past an opponent.

"OK, it was easier than we might have expected, but it means that we can put behind us a difficult week," commented Real Madrid coach Vicente Del Bosque, referring to the fact that his team had previously lost two poor games in the last seven days.

Morientes headed home Real's first goal after 20 minutes, connecting with a Luis Figo cross, and the pair repeated exactly the same trick 15 minutes later.

Sandwiched in between Morientes' first two goals, Zinedine Zidane showed how much he had been missed by tapping home Madrid's second goal with his left foot.

The world's most expensive player had missed Real's last two games with a sprained ankle.

Morientes then completed his hat-trick after 53 minutes, changing the recipe for success and firing in from close range with his right foot.

Las Palmas defender Angel Lopez headed into his own net after 70 minutes and less than 60 seconds later the Canary islanders' demoralised defence showed it had learnt nothing from the first half as Figo fired over another inch-perfect pass for Morientes to head home.

Morientes hadn't finished and 11 minutes before the whistle he headed his 15th goal of the season, this time thanks to service from Pedro Munitis, which puts him well ahead



Ibon Begoa of Malaga and Josemi of Alaves in action during the Primera Liga match between Malaga and Alaves.

## Madrid in seventh Heaven

in the race to be the Spanish first division's top scorer.

The only bright moment for Las Palmas goalkeeper Nacho Gonzalez was when he saved a 88th minute penalty by Morientes, after Oscar Minambres had been brought down.

The Spanish international became the first player for eight years - and only one of two men in the last 23 seasons - to score five goals or more in a Spanish first division game.

"Morientes is someone whose confidence soars when he scores goals. I'm sure this performance will have a big effect on what he

does in future games," added Del Bosque, which should tighten Real's next few opponents.

Not surprisingly, the 26 year-old player himself was jubilant.

"This is probably the best game of my career," said Morientes. "I have not scored five goals in a game since I was a youngster. Before today I had never even got a hat-trick in a Real Madrid jersey, let alone five."

At the other end of the table, Real Sociedad got a valuable win at home to Real Zaragoza to climb off the bottom of the table, although they are still mired in the relegation zone in 18th position.

Yugoslav striker Darko Kovacevic repaid another installment on the club record transfer fee Real Sociedad paid for him last month, with a goal in the first minute.

Javier De Pedro put Real Sociedad further ahead just before the break and although Savo Milosevic headed one back for Zaragoza after 56 minutes, Sociedad's third from Oscar De Paula six minutes before the end sealed the victory.

Espanyol kept their eyes on the ball right until the final whistle for the second time in five days by beating Valladolid with the only goal of the game coming from second-half substitute Martin Posse a minute into injury time.

The Barcelona-based club salvaged a point in a 2-2 draw at Rayo Vallecano on Wednesday, three minutes into time added on.

Malaga were another club to get a late victory with their Panamanian striker Dely Valdes heading the winner right on 90 minutes for a 1-

0 victory over Alaves, the first league win in seven games for the Costa Del Sol club.

Deportivo La Coruna, league leaders several times this season, slipped up when they could only draw 0-0 with visiting Villarreal.

The Galicians suffered further when their former Spanish international defender Donato suffering a season-ending achilles tendon injury.

The Brazilian-born defender is, at 39, the oldest player in the Spanish first division but Deportivo president Augusto Lendoiro said immediately that Donato needn't worry about being discarded.

He has played in more than half of Deportivo's official games this season and so his contract will be renewed automatically for one more year.

Catalan giants Barcelona stay in fifth place after a dismal 0-0 draw at Real Mallorca on Saturday.

## THIS WEEK

(Sunday, February 17)

Las Palmas vs Valladolid  
Athletic Bilbao vs Real Madrid  
Alaves vs Betis  
Celta Vigo vs Malaga  
Villarreal vs Valencia  
Barcelona vs Deportivo Coruna  
Zaragoza vs Mallorca  
Sevilla vs Real Sociedad  
Rayo Vallecano vs Tenerife  
Osasuna vs Espanyol

## WORLD LEAGUES

### DUTCH EREDIVISIE

	P	W	L	D	PTS
Feyenoord	21	14	4	3	45
Ajax Amsterdam	21	14	4	3	45
PSV Eindhoven	22	12	6	4	40
Heerenveen	22	11	5	6	39
Vitesse Arnhem	22	9	5	8	35
NAC Breda	22	10	7	5	35
FC Utrecht	23	9	7	7	34
RKC Waalwijk	23	9	10	4	31
NEC Nijmegen	22	8	9	5	29
Willem II Tilburg	22	6	6	10	28
FC Den Bosch	21	6	8	7	25
De Graafschap	21	7	10	4	25
AZ Alkmaar	21	7	10	4	25
Twente Enschede	22	5	7	10	25
Roda JC Kerkrade	22	7	11	4	25
FC Groningen	23	6	13	4	22
Sparta Rotterdam	22	4	9	9	21
Fortuna Sittard	22	2	15	5	11

### BELGIAN EERSTEKLASSE

Anderlecht 7 Lierse 1, La Louvirre 1 FC Bruges 2, Antwerp 2 Aalst 0, Beveren 2 Ghent 2, Lokeren 1 Lommel 0, Genk 4 Germinal Beerschot 4, Westerlo 3 SC Charleroi 3, St Truiden 1 RWDM 2, Mouscron 2 Standard Liege 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Club Bruges	22	16	1	5	54	26	49
Anderlecht	21	13	6	2	51	23	45
Genk	21	12	8	1	60	29	44
Lokeren	22	12	6	4	34	21	42
Ghent	22	12	6	4	38	28	42
Standard Liege	21	12	4	5	40	25	40
Excelsior Mouscron	22	11	2	9	46	29	35
St Truiden	22	9	4	9	33	32	31
Beerschot	21	7	8	6	42	32	29
Westerlo	22	7	4	11	36	43	25
Charleroi	22	7	4	11	22	43	25
Lommelse	22	6	6	10	32	39	24
RWD Molenbeek	22	7	3	12	30	40	24
Lierse	22	5	6	11	34	43	21
Royal Antwerp	22	5	5	12	29	41	20
La Louviere	22	4	7	11	25	44	19
Eendracht Aalst	22	4	3	15	18	51	15
Beveren	22	2	7	13	23	58	13

### BULGARIAN FIRST DIVISION

Cherno More Varna 1 Lokomotiv Plovdiv, 1 Chernomorets Bourgas 3 Belasitsa Petrich 0, Marek Dupnitsa 0 Spartak Varna 0, Beroe Stara Zagora 0 Litex Lovech 2, Spartak Plevan 0 CSKA Sofia 0, Slavia Sofia 1 Lokomotiv Sofia 0, Levski Sofia 4 Neftochimik Bourgas 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levski Sofia	18	14	3	1	35	12	45
CSKA Sofia	18	12	4	2	33	10	40
Litex Lovech	18	12	4	2	38	20	40
Lokomotiv Plovdiv	18	9	4	5	26	17	31
Neftochimik Bourgas	18	8	5	5	27	18	29
Spartak Plevan	18	8	3	7	30	26	27
Slavia Sofia	18	5	6	7	15	21	21
Lokomotiv Sofia	18	5	5	8	24	22	20
Spartak Varna	18	4	8	6	22	22	20
Chernomorets Bourgas	18	4	5	9	15	37	17
Belasitsa Petrich	18	4	4	10	14	24	16
Cherno More Varna	18	4	4	10	19	25	16
Marek Dupnitsa	18	3	5	10	15	33	14
Beroe Stara Zagora	18	2	4	12	7	33	10

Betis 1 Athletic 1, Tenerife 1 Sevilla 1, Espanyol 1 Valladolid 0, Real Madrid 7 Las Palmas 0, Malaga 1 Alaves 0, Deportivo 0 Villarreal 0, Real Sociedad 3 Zaragoza 1, Osasuna 1 Rayo Vallecano 0, Valencia 0 Celta Vigo 0, Mallorca 0 Barcelona 0.

	P	W	L	D	PTS
Real Madrid	25	12	6	7	43
Valencia	25	11	4	10	43
Celta Vigo	25	10	4	11	41
La Coruna	25	12	8	5	41
Barcelona	25	11	7	7	40
Real Betis	25	10	6	9	39
Alaves	25	12	10	3	39
Athletic Bilbao	25	10	6	9	39
Sevilla	25	9	8	8	35
Valladolid	25	10	10	5	35
Espanyol	25	9	10	6	33
Osasuna	25	8	9	8	32
Malaga	25	7	8	10	31
Villarreal	25	8	10	7	31
Las Palmas	25	7	10	8	29
Real Zaragoza	25	8	12	5	29
Mallorca	25	7	12	6	27
Real Sociedad	25	7	14	4	25
Rayo Vallecano	25	6	13	6	24
Tenerife	25	6	12	7	24

## SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

### CELTIC MARCH ON

Henrik Larsson hit a first-half hat-trick and also missed a penalty as Celtic continued their relentless march towards the Scottish premier league title with a 5-0 demolition of Dunfermline on Saturday.

The champions maintained a 13-point lead over second-placed Rangers who won 2-0 at Hearts with goals from Ronald de Boer and Neil McCann.

Larsson wasted a fourth minute spot kick for Celtic after Youssef Rossi nudged John Hartson in the back. The Sweden striker's effort was superbly turned around the post by Scott Thomson.

Larsson atoned for the miss by making the breakthrough nine minutes later as he nodded home after Bobo Balde headed an Alan Thompson corner back across goal.

His second came after 32 minutes with a neat finish from Hartson's cross.

The Welsh striker then fired home from the right side of the box to make it 3-0 six minutes later after Larsson's freekick had deflected off the wall.

Larsson completed his hat-trick two minutes before the break, again set-up by Hartson, whose good recent form up front meant that striker Chris Sutton had to be content with a place in Celtic's defence.

Didier Agathe netted a fifth 17 minutes from time with a thumping drive as Celtic bounced back from their midweek Scottish League Cup semifinal defeat by Rangers.

Rangers had to wait until the 61st minute before making the breakthrough against Hearts at Tynecastle. McCann's cross from the left was dummed by Tore Andre Flo and De Boer made no mistake from eight metres.

McCann sealed the points eight minutes from time with a fine individual effort, carrying the ball from inside his own half before firing home.

Third-placed Livingston were held to a 1-1 draw at home by Dundee United, Derek Lilley earning the visitors a point with a late goal to cancel out David Bingham's 52nd minute opener.

Elsewhere, Aberdeen drew 1-1 with Kilmarnock, while David Ferrere netted a second half hat-trick on his debut in Motherwell's 4-0 home win over struggling Hibernian.

St Johnstone stayed bottom after losing 1-0 at Dundee.



Celtic's Neil Lennon, (front left) tangles with Rangers' Barry Ferguson in an aerial battle during their CIS match.

Aberdeen 1 Kilmarnock 1, Celtic 5 Dunfermline Athletic 0, Dundee 1 St Johnstone 0, Heart 0 Rangers 2, Livingston 1 Dundee United 1, Motherwell 4 Hibernian 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	28	25	2	1	68	14	77
Rangers	28	19	7	2	63	22	64
Livingston	27	13	8	6	39	25	47
Aberdeen	28	12	5	11	38	40	41
Kilmarnock	28	10	7	11	30	33	37
Hearts	28	10	5	13	35	36	35
Dunfermline Athletic	27	9	5	13	31	48	32
Dundee United	28	8	8	12	29	47	32
Motherwell	28	8	6	14	39	50	30
Dundee	26	8	6	12	25	37	30
Hibernian	28	5	9	14	33	47	24
St Johnstone	28	3	4	21	17	48	13

## GERMANY BUNDESLIGA

### COLOGNE STUCK AT THE BOTTOM

Hamburg SV enjoyed a 4-0 victory over bottom-placed FC Cologne in the German first division on Sunday to move up to 11th place in the table.

Hamburg fully deserved the victory, which marks the end of a bad spell for Cologne after they were trounced 4-0 by Borussia Moenchengladbach during the week.

Poland striker Milan Fukal nodded home after 34 minutes to register his third goal of the season, all from headers.

Moses Sichone put the ball into his own net for Hamburg's second on 63 minutes before Croatian striker Sergei Barbarez made it three with a header four minutes later and Bernardo Daniel Romeo added the fourth seven minutes from time.



Schalke's Danish player Ebbe Sand, (right) fights for the ball with Holger Stanislawski from St. Pauli.

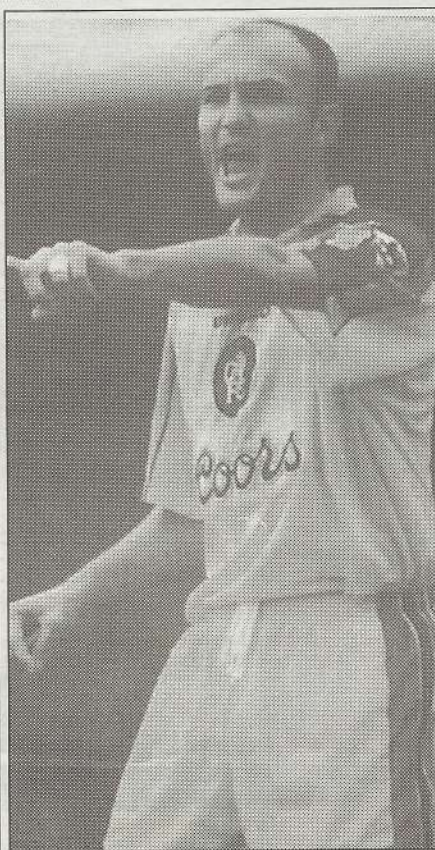
There was more misery for Cologne when Lilian Laslandes was sent off after tackling Barbarez from behind two minutes from time.

German striker Paulo Rink scored against the run of play to open the scoring in FC Nuremberg's 2-1 win over TSV 1860 Munich.

Brazilian-born Rink scored with a header in the 35th minute after a defensive blunder but Daniel Bierovka equalised with his first goal of the season three minutes into the second half. But Rajko Tavcar scored his first Bundesliga goal on 65 minutes to give the home side all three points.

	P	W	L	D	PTS
Borussia Dortmund	22	14	3	5	47
Bayer Leverkusen	22	14	5	3	45
Kaiserslautern	22	13	6	3	42
Schalke 04	22	12	5	5	41
Werder Bremen	22	12	7	3	39
Bayern Munich	22	11	6	5	38
Hertha Berlin	22	10	6	6	36
TSV 1860 Munich	22	10	9	3	33
VfB Stuttgart	22	8	7	7	31
VfL Wolfsburg	22	8	8	6	30
Hamburg SV	22	7	9	6	27
Hansa Rostock	22	7	11	4	25
SC Freiburg	22	5	9	8	23
FC Nuremberg	22	6	12	4	22
Moenchengladbach	22	4	10	8	20
Energie Cottbus	22	5	12	5	20
St Pauli Hamburg	22	3	13	6	15
Cologne	22	3	14	5	14

## FRENCH LEAGUE



Frank Lebeouf: Marseille's key defender.

### PSG DUMP MARSEILLE

Paris Saint Germain beat old rivals Marseille in a penalty shoot-out at the Parc des Princes here on Sunday, after the match was tied 1-1, to move into the quarter-finals of the French Cup.

Daniel Van Buyten's 68th minute goal looked set to be enough to earn Marseille victory before Gabriel Heinze of Argentina nodded home four minutes from time to push the match into extra time.

With the extra 30 minutes failing to separate the teams, the dramatic series of spot kicks ensued. PSG's wild celebrations, after winning them 7-6, has been a rare sight at the Parc this season as home victories have been hard to come by.

"To win on penalties was a great pleasure," said a delighted PSG coach Luis Fernandez.

The hard-fought match, which saw nine yellow cards and numerous fouls, was hardly a classic in footballing terms. It also virtually closed the lid on Marseille playing European football next season.

In the night's other game, the first division bottom club Lorient also slipped through 6-5 on penalties after a 2-2 draw following extra time at third division side Louhans-Cuiseaux.

#### Libourne-Saint-Seurin 2

(Delgado 33, 77)

Chateauroux 0

US Montagnarde	0	Monaco	1
		(Nyarko 26)	
Amiens	0	Nimes	2
		(Charpenet 2, Djukic 24)	

#### Strasbourg 2

(Ljuboja 39, Bertin 104-pen)

Lusitanos Saint-Maur 1

(Sousa 83)

Bastia 2

(Beneforti 19, Soumah 90)

Nancy 0

Reims 1 (Pallier 90) Sedan 1 (Mionnet 23)

Sedan win 4-3 on penalties

Louhans-Cuiseaux v Lorient

Paris Saint Germain v Marseille

## WORLD LEAGUES

### PORTUGUESE FIRST DIVISION

Belenenses 3 Varzim 2, Alverca 0 Maritimo Funchal 2, Beira-Mar Aveiro 1 Vitoria Setubal 0, Sporting Braga 0 Salgueiros Porto 0, Uniao Leiria 0 Boavista Porto 1, Vitoria Guimaraes 1 Santa Clara 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boavista	22	15	3	4	38	13	48
Sporting	21	14	4	3	49	17	46
Porto	21	12	3	6	34	19	39
Benfica	21	10	9	2	38	23	39
Uniao Leiria	22	10	7	5	37	23	37
Vitoria Guimaraes	22	10	5	7	27	21	35
Belenenses	22	10	4	8	31	32	34
Maritimo	22	10	2	10	28	25	32
Santa Clara	22	8	6	8	22	26	30
Braga	22	7	8	7	27	20	29
Pacos Ferreira	21	7	7	7	27	31	28
Beira Mar	22	6	6	10	34	38	24
Gil Vicente	21	7	3	11	24	36	24
Salgueiros	22	6	4	12	19	44	22
Vitoria Setubal	22	5	6	11	23	26	21
Alverca	22	5	4	13	25	44	19
Farense	21	5	4	12	17	34	19
Varzim	22	3	5	14	17	45	14

### GREEK FIRST DIVISION

Ionikos 1 Ethnikos Astir 0, Panahaiki Patras 1 Xanthi 3, Panionios 3 Olympiakos 1, Aigaleo 1 AEK Athens 3, PAOK Salonika 3 Iraklis 0, OFI Crete 0 Panathinaikos 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AEK Athens	15	11	0	4	38	17	33
Panathinaikos	15	9	3	3	31	15	30
Olympiakos	15	8	5	2	35	19	29
PAOK	15	8	4	2	28	21	28
Xanthi	15	7	4	3	22	13	25
OFI	15	6	3	6	18	17	21
Iraklis	15	5	6	3	17	17	21
Aris	15	5	5	5	17	16	20
Panionios	15	5	4	6	20	24	19
Aigaleo	15	3	3	9	17	31	12
Ethnikos Astir	14	3	3	8	12	20	12
Ionikos	15	2	5	8	11	26	11
Akratitos	14	2	3	9	13	22	9
Panahaiki	15	1	4	10	13	34	7

### TURKISH FIRST DIVISION

Istanbulspor 1 Besiktas 2, Rizespor 1 Gaziantepspor 0, Kocaelispor 0 Gencerbirligi 1, Samsunspor 1 Trabzonspor 2, Diyarbakirspor 2 Bursaspor 3, Ankaragucu 4 Goztepe 2, Denizlispor 3 Antalyaspor 2, Yozgatspor 1 Fenerbahce 2, Galatasaray 1 Malatyaspor 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	22	15	5	2	55	26	50
Besiktas	22	14	5	3	54	25	47
Fenerbahce	22	14	1	7	45	24	43
Ankaragucu	22	12	3	7	51	36	39
Gaziantepspor	22	10	4	8	37	31	34
Istanbulspor	22	9	5	8	20	21	32
Bursaspor	22	9	4	9	30	37	31
Trabzonspor	22	8	5	9	34	36	29
Denizlispor	22	7	7	8	41	31	28
Kocaelispor	22	8	4	10	27	35	28
Goztepe	22	7	7	8	20	36	28
Diyarbakirspor	22	7	-4	11	34	41	25
Gencerbirligi	22	6	7	9	29	36	25
Malatyaspor	22	8	0	14	24	41	24
Samsunspor	22	6	4	12	19	32	22
Antalyaspor	22	5	6	11	29	48	21
Yozgatspor	22	5	5	12	30	40	20

# NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

After Round 18	TOTAL							PTS	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	Bye	F	A		P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
PERTH GLORY	17	13	3	1	1	38	15	42	9	7	2	0	18	6	8	6	1	1	20	9
NEWCASTLE UNITED	17	8	7	2	1	23	15	31	8	5	3	0	11	4	9	3	4	2	12	11
OLYMPIC SHARKS	16	8	2	6	2	22	13	26	8	5	2	1	12	3	8	3	0	5	10	8
BRISBANE STRIKERS	16	7	5	4	2	27	23	26	8	3	2	3	12	12	8	4	5	1	15	11
PARRAMATTA POWER	17	7	4	6	1	19	17	25	9	5	1	3	12	9	8	2	3	3	7	8
NORTHERN SPIRIT	17	6	5	6	1	23	27	23	9	3	2	4	10	15	8	3	3	2	13	12
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	17	7	1	9	1	27	29	22	9	4	1	4	12	14	8	3	0	5	15	15
MARCONI STALLIONS	16	5	5	6	2	18	20	20	8	3	3	2	12	11	8	2	2	4	6	9
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	17	4	6	7	1	16	25	18	6	2	0	5	5	11	10	2	4	4	10	14
SOUTH MELBOURNE	16	4	5	7	2	14	18	17	10	3	2	5	9	12	6	1	3	2	5	5
SYDNEY UNITED	17	4	4	9	1	18	28	16	9	1	3	5	10	18	8	4	1	3	8	10
ADELAIDE CITY	16	3	6	7	2	21	23	15	8	3	4	1	16	10	8	0	2	6	5	13
KINGZ FC	17	3	5	9	1	22	35	14	8	3	3	3	10	15	9	0	2	7	12	22

## PARRAMATTA POWER

(D Barrett 46)

## OLYMPIC SHARKS

1

0

Venue: Parramatta Stadium. Crowd: 5,844. Referee: M. Shield.  
Cautions: P Bennett (PP) 28', A Elrich (PP) 38', D Brown (PP) 44', A Milicic (OS) 33'

Teams: PARRAMATTA POWER: Pogliacomi, Barrett, Orlie, Tobin, O'Sullivan, Arambasic (Holman 78), Brown, Buonavoglia, Elrich, Eagleton, Bennett.

OLYMPIC SHARKS: Bolton, Laybutt, Kohler, Srhoj, Pondeljak, Halpin, North, Harris (Macallister 70), Milicic (Ishida 73), Packer, Durante.

## KINGZ FC

## WOLLONGONG WOLVES

0

0

Venue: North Harbour Stadium. Crowd: 3,199. Referee: N. Fox.  
Cautions: B Blake (WW) 37'

Teams: KINGZ FC: Theoklitos, Perry, Goutzioulis, Vlahos, Ngata, Campbell (Burton 63), Markovski, Hooker, Banks (Buljubasic 88), Jackson, Douglas (Wylie 82).

WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Anastasiadis, Ceccoli, Stanton, Castro, Young, Sekulovski, Anthopoulos, Huxley, Blake, Mennillo (Wells 88), Sharland (Babic 56).

## NORTHERN SPIRIT

(S Thomas 2, A Cervinski 75)

## BRISBANE STRIKERS

2

2

(P Grierson 44, M Baird 83)

Venue: North Sydney Oval. Crowd: 2,808. Referee: P.Mur.  
Cautions: Nil

Teams: NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson, Watts, Bell, Spencer, Trajkovski, Thomas, Foster (Enes 71), Cervinski, Cardozo, Hutchinson (Stergiopoulos 76), Cartwright.

BRISBANE STRIKERS: Kearnton, Alagich, Stefanutto, McLaren, Grierson, Rech, Foster (Drake 60), Trajanovski (Baird 75), Carbone, Heath (McKain), McKay.

## NEWCASTLE UNITED

(S Baillie 26, R Middleby 91)

## ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

2

1

(A Moreira 7)

Venue: Energy Australia Stadium. Crowd: 7,206. Referee: C.Diomis.  
Cautions: A Vidmar (AF) 87'

Teams: NEWCASTLE UNITED: Beltrame, Roberts, Zoricich, Bingley, Griffiths, Tsekenis, Baillie, Blagojevic, Schirripa (Dodd 66), Masi (McBreen 58), Middleby.

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Godley, Kemp, Fyfe, Kovacevic, Pantelis (Saric 87), Veart, Vidmar, Moreira, Tunbridge, Rees, Goulding (Karlovic 77).

## MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

(J Porter 43, 81)

## SOUTH MELBOURNE

2

3

(C Boutsianis 4, V Coveny 9, M Murdocca 87)

Venue: Knights Stadium. Crowd: 6,678. Referee: E. Lennie.  
Cautions: A Vargas (MK) 56', R Vargas (MK) 88', S Panopoulos (SM) 38', V Coveny (SM) 70'  
Red Cards: S Panopoulos (SM) 40'

Teams: MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: John, R Vargas, Ognjenovski, Horvat, Marth, Vasilevski (Ovcin 38), (Debevc 46), Marusic, Porter, Da Costa, A Vargas, De Jesus.

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis, Durakovic, Liparoti, Panopoulos, Coveny (Buljan 78), Sekulovski, Murdocca, Kisorbo, Lia (Tolios 85), Boutsianis (Trimboli 53).

## SYDNEY UNITED

(C Menapi 63)

## PERTH GLORY

1

2

(D Mori 71, N Mrdja 76)

Venue: Sydney United SC. Crowd: 3,579. Referee: M. Breeze.  
Cautions: V Savoca (SU) 35', E Olic (SU) 81', S Pryce 58'

Teams: SYDNEY UNITED: Knezevic, Savoca, Olic, Arrarte, Deur, Genc, Menapi, Bilokapic, Watkins (Cevinini 56), Sinozic, Zelic (Kopic 73).

PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Horsley, Harnwell, Deans (Tarka 67), Miller, Maloney, Despotovski (Mrdja 60), Hassell (Edwards 60), Junior, Mori, Pryce.

## PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Massimo Murdocca: Derby destroyer clinching the winning goal against the Knights that gave South Melbourne the winning points.

## LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
DAMIAN MORI	Perth Glory	13
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	10
FOSTER Paul	Brisbane Strikers	9
MILICIC Ante	Olympic Sharks	9
PORTER Joel	Melbourne Knights	9
DA COSTA Toto	Melbourne Knights	8
URLIOVIC Paul	Kingz FC	8
RECH Fernando	Brisbane Strikers	8
CARDOZO Pablo	Northern Spirit	7

## ROUND 19

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 15

Kingz FC vs Sydney United

South Melbourne vs Northern Spirit

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 16

W'gong Wolves vs Adelaide City

Brisbane Strikers vs Parramatta Power

Marconi Stallions vs Melbourne Knights

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 17

Olympic Sharks vs Newcastle United

Perth Glory - Bye

BYE - MARCONI STALLIONS